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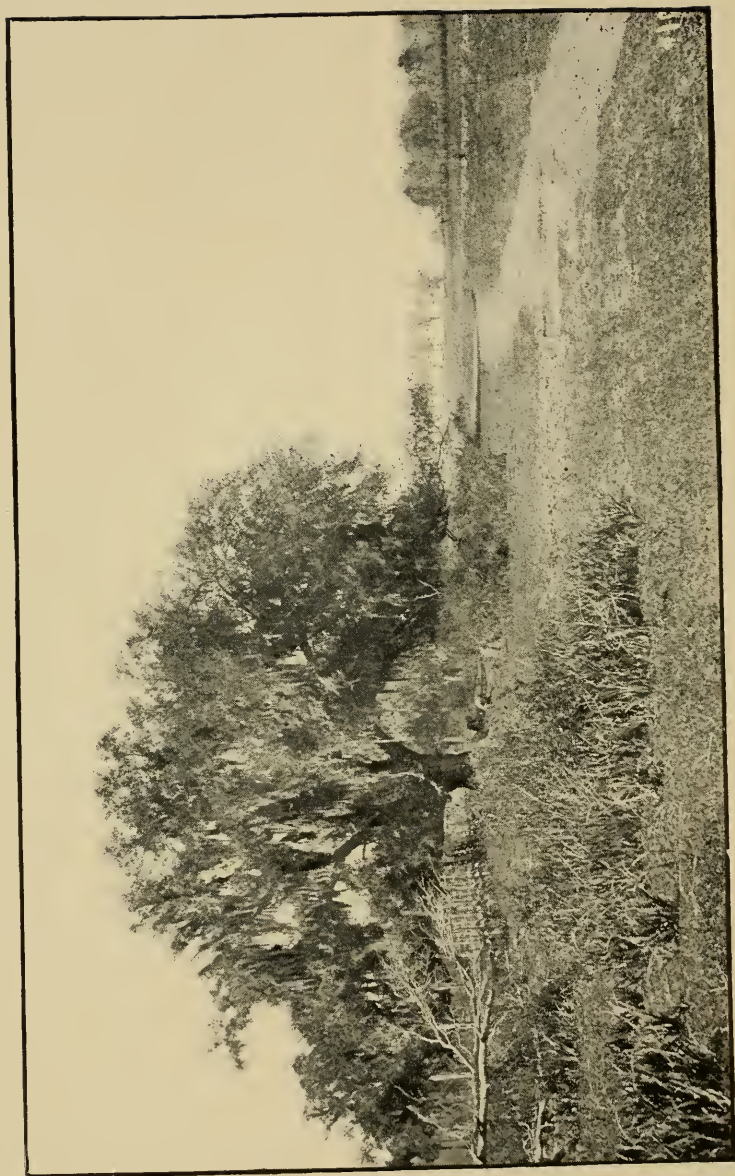




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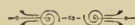
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C. A. O'Brien,

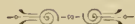


AN ACADIAN LANDSCAPE.

IN ACADIA.



THE ACADIANS
IN
STORY AND SONG.



NEW ORLEANS:
F. F. HANSELL & BRO., PUBLISHERS
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INTRODUCTION.

I have been led to undertake the compilation of this little volume by a desire to enlist the interest of the public in the Acadian people of Louisiana. Brought up in their neighborhood and personally acquainted with many of them, my family learned to respect their modest virtues and to admire the many excellent qualities that distinguish them; the courage and honesty of the men and the sweetness, purity and fidelity of the women. In the period of great depression through which Louisiana has passed, all industries languished and these unsophisticated peasants felt the touch of want in homes where formerly reigned a rude plenty. It was then that it occurred to us that if their handwoven fabrics of cotton, grown by themselves, could be brought to the attention of the art-loving public, a remunerative field would be open for their industry. My sister, Mrs. Sarah Avery Leeds, devoted herself to the task of encouraging these humble workers, and, through the agency of the Christian Women's Exchange of New Orleans, found for them a market for their wares. These earnings have brightened many a cottage home. This industry has been extending for

some years, and is now illustrated at the Louisiana Building in the Columbian Exposition, where their simple handicrafts of spinning and weaving are carried on by Acadian women in their provincial costume.

The opening of new railroads into their country, the influx of Northern immigrants, the cultivation of rice for export, and the enlightening influences of newly established schools have, within the past few years, wrought a great change in the condition of things. Soon the picture given in these pages of primitive Acadian life will belong to the past, and to preserve it from oblivion has been another incentive that these leaves should be gathered. The poet Longfellow has made old Acadia immortal, but the plain words of prose give added verity and power even to his limnings.

The Acadians are the offspring of a sturdy stock of French peasantry planted in Nova Scotia in the beginning of the seventeenth century, who were expelled from their adopted country in 1755 by the English, and scattered by the rude hand of military power from Cape Breton to the Gulf of Mexico. Absorbed or rejected by other communities, a number of them found a congenial home in Southern Louisiana. Here preserving their national traits, customs and speech, they have maintained themselves in communities distinct from their neighbors and quite separate from the great tide of American thought and progress. Whatever they may have lost by this isolation, they have preserved the primitive virtues of

a fine race of peasantry and have gained a physical development superior to their ancestors in the old country. Satisfied with the easy conditions of life in a land of plenty, they have lived without ambition and with a history the least eventful of all people of the United States. Nevertheless, from their ranks have arisen many men who have helped to shape the destiny of Louisiana. Governors Thibodaux and Mouton were justly honored. In our late civil war such leaders as General Alfred Mouton, Fournet and others won honored recognition among the soldiers of the South, and in more recent times the names of Poché, Voorhies, and Breaux have given dignity to the bench and bar of the State.

In attempting to give to the public in brief form a true picture of this population so remote from the highways of the world, I have conceived it to be necessary to present a short but well considered account of the Acadians of Nova Scotia. This has been kindly prepared for this little volume by Professor John R. Ficklen, Professor of History in Tulane University. In this sketch no indulgence of fancy has been allowed to mar the historical accuracy of the details. The compiler desires here to make acknowledgment to Professor Ficklen for his generous aid. To complete the picture of the Acadians in Nova Scotia, a leaf has been borrowed from "Baddeck," through the complaisance of its distinguished author, Mr. Charles Dudley Warner, in which he quaintly portrays the remnant of this people in their old home.

As has been already stated, the Acadians of Louisiana are a simple and ingenuous people; no romance hovers around them other than that which clusters about the virtuous lives of home-loving cottagers. As a population, though not enterprising, they are industrious; the women spinning and weaving, the men tilling their farms and herding their cattle. Many of them live upon the bayous opening into the Gulf and are excellent sailors, giving proof of their Norman and Breton ancestry. One of the most pleasing features of their social life is the general amenity and the self-respect of their bearing. They exercise an unostentatious hospitality, and the stranger within their gates is kindly welcomed; but, as French is the only language used among them, the difference of speech offers an effectual barrier to the outside world. Their French is not, as is erroneously supposed, a rude *patois*, but conforms very closely to the prevailing dialect of Normandy and is very little removed from a good French vernacular. It varies, however, with different localities.

In the spring of 1886 it was my good fortune, together with several members of my family, to make a pilgrimage into the heart of the Acadian settlements with Mr. Charles Dudley Warner as our guest, and I was thus prepared for his charming article published in Harper's Monthly of February of the following year. His descriptions of what we saw are so vivid and graphic that I have asked and obtained permission to reproduce them in part in this compilation.

Professor Alcée Fortier of Tulane University has given a veracious and *naïve* description of a visit to the Acadian country, from which I have borrowed most freely. My only regret is that the limits of my little volume do not permit me to transfer to these pages his eloquent account of the expulsion of the Acadians, in which he goes over the same ground with Professor Ficklen, but with the natural indignation of a fellow-countryman to the exiles.

No better idea can be given of the simple, contented lives of the Acadians, both before the tragedy of their expulsion from their beloved Basin of Minas and in their new homes on the beautiful bank of the Teche in far Louisiana, than can be found in the pages of Evangeline. Scarcely anywhere is the power of poetic insight better illustrated than in this lovely poem. Longfellow never saw the scenes he describes with such wonderful fidelity. It is said that the descriptions of Louisiana landscape were sent him by a physician living in St. Martinsville, the old town he tells of at the headwaters of the Teche. Yet, while preserving an absolute truth to nature in every detail, his genius has cast a glamour and charm over the spreading prairies and luxuriant forests of the Attakapas, and lent a grace and a glory to the humble lives of its simple peasants, so that the beautiful and pathetic story of Evangeline and her people possesses a perennial interest and enlists our kindest feelings for their descendants. So true is the poet to nature that often, in gliding over the dark waters of the winding bayou, I have exclaimed, "This

was the home of Basil the blacksmith, and here is the turn where the wide spreading live oak dipped its branches festooned with vines into the water and hid Evangeline's boat from her lover."

With such aids to a vivid conception of the life and character of the Acadians and their environment, no better idea can be given of them than in extracts, often familiar, from the poem that has made them famous; and it is with these borrowed pictures that I shall place them before my readers.

MARGARET AVERY JOHNSTON.

New Orleans, May, 1893.

I

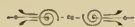
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HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE ACADIANS

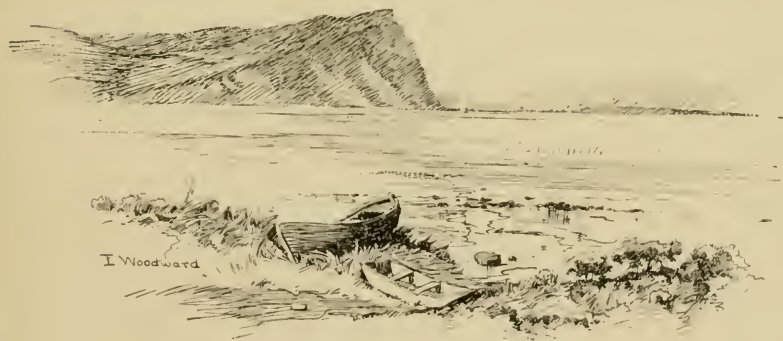
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BY JOHN R. FICKLEN

Historical Sketch of the Acadians.



TO understand the story of the Acadians we must first of all transport ourselves to another land than fair Louisiana, and we must imagine ourselves as present in the last century, when a fierce war for dominion was waging between those old-time enemies, France and England. The country that once bore the name of Acadia is now called Nova Scotia, a name that it received from a certain Sir William Alexander, who for a short period held the province as a grant from James I of England.



BASIN OF MINAS AND MOUNT BLOMIDON.

The exact boundaries of the province were for some time a subject of contention between the two nations; but in the present sketch we shall regard Acadia as the peninsula

lying east of New Brunswick, and between the Bay of Fundy and the Atlantic Ocean.

This is the land around which Longfellow has thrown the glamour of romance, and if poetry were only history, we should be justified in rechristening the country and calling it Arcadia. The name Acadia, however, has a more prosaic origin; it is derived from Aquoddie, an Indian term for a fish called the pollock. Though the English claimed the country by virtue of Cabot's discovery, its earliest inhabitants were Frenchmen from the coast of France. Its settlement dates back to the time when the hardy fishermen of Normandy and Brittany plied their trade along the coast of Newfoundland and Cape Breton Island.

The first town founded in Acadia was Port Royal, situated on a retired basin that opens upon the great Bay of Fundy. Here within sound of the mighty tides that rush through the broad inlet of Fundy, rising often to the height of sixty feet in Chignecto Bay, its northern extremity, a Frenchman named Poutrincourt made a small settlement in 1605, just fifteen years before the Mayflower touched land at Plymouth Rock.

The story of the little colony was for many years the same as that of the English colonies in Virginia and North Carolina. It was a story of vicissitudes, the settlers gaining a precarious livelihood from the cultivation of the soil and from fishing, but depending largely upon the supplies sent over at long intervals by the mother country. But there was another circumstance that for more than a hundred years was destined to retard the prosperity of the Acadian peninsula. It lay just north of the English colonies that now form the New England

States, and these colonies, from early times, looked with no good will upon a French settlement which was near enough to prove an important point of departure in case the French government determined to execute its vast plan of sweeping away the English settlers, and extending the boundary of New France to the Atlantic seaboard.

For many years after the founding of Port Royal, however, Acadia was merely a pawn on the great chess-board of European diplomacy. During the ascendancy of Cromwell, New England forces were sent from Boston and Charleston, and the Acadians were brought nominally under English rule; but Charles II, who was willing to barter his kingdom to satisfy his vices, restored the country to the French. In 1690, during the reign of William and Mary, it was again conquered by Massachusetts forces, and again restored to France by the treaty of Ryswick seven years later. Then began the War of the Spanish Succession, in which the Duke of Marlborough humbled the pride of France and dazzled the eyes of the world by a series of extraordinary victories. During this war the men of Massachusetts, as if in scorn of diplomacy, had once more subdued Acadia; and when Louis XIV, exhausted by the long struggle, agreed to the peace of Utrecht (1713), he made a formal cession of Acadia or Nova Scotia to England. Since that famous treaty the country has never changed hands.

Doubtless when the transfer was accomplished, the simple-minded Acadians hoped for tranquillity and a chance to cultivate their rich fields, undismayed by the sound of cannon and musket. But the story of their woes was not yet ended. Against their will they had

been subjected to a foreign domination, and when the English garrisons were placed over them, they naturally chafed under the government of a people who were aliens both in race and religion. Their lot suggests an analogy with that of the Britons during the Roman occupation. It is true that by the conditions of the treaty of Utrecht, the Acadians were to be allowed to emigrate within one year to the other French provinces, and to take with them their movable goods. But as by the same treaty they were granted the practice of their own religion in Nova Scotia, and as the English government, hoping to make them good subjects of the English sovereign, did not exercise any pressure, most of the inhabitants elected to remain. At this period their number was small, there being in 1713 only some three hundred families in the whole province; and, of course, they were not regarded as a serious menace to the provincial government. But it soon became apparent that the Acadian race, like most other poor and simple people that live in country districts, was extremely prolific. Their fecundity was so great that, some years before the expulsion, the population rose to sixteen thousand souls. Though many of these emigrated to the islands in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and to the French posts, there remained in 1754, one year before the expulsion, more than 9000 Acadians under the supervision of the English garrisons. This large increase, it seems to the writer, has not been taken fully into consideration by those historians who condemn the expulsion of the Acadians as an act of unnecessary cruelty.

When the English government, in 1713, took formal possession of Acadia, the old settlement of Port Royal was immediately occupied, and its name changed to Annapolis,

in honor of Queen Anne, then reigning in England. In 1714, however, Queen Anne died, and when George I came to the throne, Governor Caulfield thought that as the "year of removal" had elapsed, the remaining inhabitants of Acadia should be summoned to swear allegiance to the new king. This oath the Acadians, perhaps in view of the fact that the English garrison consisted of only two hundred men, and that the fortune of war might soon restore the province to the hands of the French, refused to take during several years; though according to the treaty of Utrecht they were "to enjoy the free exercise of their religion," *only* if they were willing to be subject to the kingdom of Great Britain. For the present, however, though the oath was several times offered them, no effort was made to enforce it or to interfere with their religion; and the relations of the inhabitants with the provincial government remained unsettled till 1725. In the meantime the English government had been constantly hearing reports that the Catholic priests sent among the Acadians from Canada were not only religious, but political missionaries; and it was feared that this simple people, superstitiously attached to their religion, might soon be changed into rebels, and might thus assist in the recovery of the province by the French. In 1725, therefore, the English officials resolved that the long delayed oath should be taken. The officers, however, before whom the oath was subscribed, unfortunately modified the form to suit the wishes of the inhabitants, who swore to be faithful to King George, but were permitted to add that in any subsequent wars they should be exempt from bearing arms against the French, the Indians or the English! This neutrality, ever afterwards claimed by the Acadians, was, as we shall

see, the pregnant source of trouble with the English authorities. As soon as this new attitude of the inhabitants was reported to the lieutenant-governor of Acadia, he denied the right of the officers to grant such a concession; and five years later (1730) nearly all the inhabitants consented to subscribe an oath without any written conditions. It ran as follows: “ Je promets et je jure sincèrement en foi de Chrétien que je serai entièrement fidèle et obéirai vraiment à Sa Majesté le roi George II, que je reconnais pour le souverain seigneur de l’Acadie ou Nouvelle Ecosse.” In spite, however, of this written form, the Acadians maintained that a verbal promise was given them by Richard Phillips, governor at this time, that they should not be required to bear arms against the French or the Indians. In other words, if the Acadians spoke truly, this oath was as anomalous as the first, and reasserted their neutrality. Be that as it may, for twenty years no other oath was required of the Acadians, and when an unconditional oath was finally offered them, we shall see that it was offered by a stern, unrelenting governor, and that the people refused to accept it.

As to the conduct of the Acadians towards the English during these twenty years, there are conflicting accounts. The truth seems to be that, though there was much discontent, the great mass of the people demanded nothing better than to be let alone by both French and English. Their country was most favorable for the pursuit of agriculture. Though the climate from December to March was severe, the temperature often falling to twenty degrees below zero, the summer and the autumn were most propitious seasons. Breezes, at the same time balmy and invigorating, encouraged the growth of the crops, and the

harvest months were beautiful beyond expression. A range of mountains, called the Cobequid, stretched across the peninsula their line of blue summits, and both the slopes and the valleys between were well watered and of extraordinary fertility. The simple farmers dreamed not of the rich coal fields which lay beneath the surface of the ground, and which in our day yield so abundantly, nor of the gold that has been discovered in glittering grains on the bottom of their mountain streams. It was enough for them that the glebe was adapted to flowers, fruits and cereals, and that the rich harvests made the golden autumn a season of joy and abundance. If they could only have seen the government of France established once more in the land and the heretics expelled from its borders, their cup of happiness, they doubtless thought, would have been full to overflowing.

They lived in rude huts, and their domestic life seems to have been simple and as pure as life generally was among the humble and ignorant classes of that day. They were without books and without education. "In all my experience of the Acadians," declares a contemporary, "I have never known more than one or two who could read and write." It is a significant fact that in their oath of allegiance nearly all the inhabitants signed their names with a cross. They broke the monotony of their daily lives by squabbling over their boundaries, and bringing petty suits for the redress of grievances. But, however, peaceable their intentions were, they were not destined to live out their lives in ease and contentment.

Their priests, who owed allegiance to the bishop of Canada, continued to keep the Acadians in a state of

unrest. Fearful lest their flocks, following their interest, would trade with the English and gradually forget their allegiance to France, these priests left no stone unturned to keep alive the strong antipathy that the Acadians naturally felt towards what they regarded as a domineering and heretical government. Already in 1729, a priest named Breeley had been expelled from the province on the charge of exercising political influence. Later on one of his successors, Le Loutre, became famous throughout the country for his control over the simple-minded Acadians and the fierce tribe of Micmac Indians, whose services in making raids on the English settlements the French rewarded liberally. With a religious enthusiasm not inferior to that of Ignatius Loyola himself, Le Loutre made himself the spiritual and political leader of the Acadians, threatening them with fire and sword if they disobeyed him. At the siege of Beauséjour, he could be seen, in his shirt-sleeves, and pipe in mouth, rushing about among his people and encouraging them in the defence of the fort. Sincerity and devotion to the cause of religion are qualities that must always demand a degree of respect; but as the result showed, nothing could have been more unwise for the secular welfare of the Acadians than the ministration of their priests. Fanning the flame of religious antipathy, inciting the people not to assimilate in any way the political ideas of their governors, the Acadian priests kept alive the suspicions of the English and helped to prevent the amalgamation of the two races. "Nobody," said a French contemporary, "was more fit than Le Loutre to carry discord and desolation into a country."

On Cape Breton Island, the strong fort of Louisbourg,

the Gibraltar of America, had been built by the French at an enormous expense, and it was a constant menace to the peace of the neighboring province of Nova Scotia. But in 1745 the New Englanders, under Pepperrell, combined with the English under Warren in a brilliant attack upon the fort, and Louisbourg fell into the hands of the English. All danger, therefore, from this quarter seemed to be removed: but three years later, by the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, George II, "yielding to diplomatic necessity," surrendered the island and the fort to Louis XV. This restoration, by increasing the danger of a French invasion, affected adversely the fortunes of the Acadians.

Until the year 1749, however, affairs in Acadia received little attention from the English home government. The Duke of Newcastle, who, for so many years, was prime minister to George II, was thoroughly incompetent to perform the duties of his high office. The king used to complain that it was a hard fate which imposed upon him the premiership of Newcastle, a man who was not worthy to be chamberlain to a petty German prince; and Macaulay has scoffed at the duke for being ignorant that Cape Breton was an island. However, in 1743, the English seem to have appreciated the necessity of meeting the danger from the French by the planting of a colony in Nova Scotia. An advertisement in the London Gazette met with a ready response. Twenty five hundred settlers accepted the inducements offered by the government, and to this emigration we owe the existence of the town of Halifax. This settlement, in three years, had increased to 4000 inhabitants, and its growth caused much disquietude among the French; for Canada was still in the possession of France, and Louis XV naturally wished to recapture the lost

Acadia. The Micmac Indians were encouraged by Le Loutre to make raids on the English settlement, and thus discourage the growth of the colony. On one occasion the savages took eighteen scalps, "for which service Le Loutre was obliged to pay them 1800 livres, Acadian money;" a sum that was afterwards returned to him by the French commander at Louisbourg. The indignation of the English at this savage method of waging war may well be imagined. The Acadians, also, were encouraged to disguise themselves as Indians and join in these raids upon the country around Halifax. According to Parkman, "Many disguised Acadians did in fact join the Indian war parties; and their doing so was no secret to the English."

In view of all this the new governor, Cornwallis, declared in 1749 that the Acadians must accept a new oath, which should deny them any exemption in the matter of bearing arms; if called upon they must assist the English government against its enemies. While from a sentimental point of view such an oath may seem to us an act of oppression, it may be justified by an appeal to the customs and laws of all countries. Neutrality could not be granted to those who were living under the British flag in the British possessions, and so near to the hostile Canadian government.

Hearing that this unconditional oath was to be administered, a deputation of Acadians appeared before Cornwallis and asked for "a general permission to leave the province." But the governor replied that until peace were firmly established he could not grant such permission, because as soon as they crossed to the Canadian border they would be compelled to take up arms against the English.

Thus we see that the poor Acadians were between two fires. To escape both was no longer possible. Their situation must appeal strongly to the sympathy of all who contemplate it. By race and religion they felt compelled to refuse to take an unconditional oath of allegiance to the English King; while the English government, pursuing that stern policy which has so often marked its dealings with other nations, was gradually coming to the decision that the Acadians must either take such an oath or be compelled to remove to some country where their presence could no longer menace the peace of the province. Alas for the Acadians that Quebec did not fall before the victorious arms of Wolfe in 1754 instead of 1759! With the English in possession of Canada, it is more than probable that the sad expatriation which we are to describe would never have taken place.

It was, moreover, the peculiar misfortune of the Acadians that within a brief period they passed under the control of several different governors. Thus there was no continuity of policy. Cornwallis and his successor Hopson seem to have exercised considerable indulgence toward the peasant farmers. Though the strict oath was several times offered to the inhabitants, the latter always succeeded in deferring the evil day, and the final alternative was not enforced.

Far different were the character and the conduct of the man who in 1754 assumed the responsibilities of governor. This was Charles Lawrence, who had been a major in a company of infantry and afterwards chancellor in the cabinet of Governor Cornwallis. Thoroughly out of sympathy with the simple-minded and much harassed Acadians, Lawrence was bent on forcing them to conform

to the letter of the English law, or expelling them from the province, and strengthening the power of England by introducing English settlers to occupy their lands.

In former years the expulsion of the inhabitants had been several times suggested. It was especially advocated by Sherley, governor of Massachusetts, who wrote many letters on this subject to the Duke of Newcastle. In 1747, however, the duke ordered Sherley to inform the Acadians that as long as they were peaceable subjects, they should remain in undisturbed possession of their lands. This assurance was due partly to the fear of the English that Le Loutre might continue to persuade the Acadians under his control to take refuge in Canada, where they would swell the numbers of the French; and partly to the hope that it would finally be possible to identify the interests of the Acadians with the wishes of the English government.

Having decided that it was impossible to attain the end in view by peaceable means, Lawrence determined to resort to drastic measures. Whether or nor he regarded the Acadians as a standing menace to the safety of the English settlements has been a subject of controversy between two rival historians in our own country. The fact is that Lawrence has left us two letters on this important point, the contents of which are contradictory. Thus in 1751, he writes to the English Board of Trade as follows: "I believe that a very large part of the Acadians *would submit to any terms rather than take up arms on either side.*" But again in 1755, just a few months before the expulsion, he writes this letter to General Braddock: "I esteem it my duty to acquaint you that, in case of a rupture with France, my forces will no ways be in proportion to

the number of posts which we must be obliged to defend, especially if it be considered that, even in the heart of the province, we have what they call neutral French (Acadians), inhabitants well armed and connected with the French king; so that upon the least attempt which Canada would make to invade us, I believe *it is more than probable that they would immediately join them.*” Which letter shall we accept as expressing the true convictions of Governor Lawrence when he ordered the expulsion of the Acadians? As he may well have changed his opinion after 1751, it would seem only just to accept his later utterance. It is true that in 1744, when the Acadians at Grand Pré were invited by a French force from Cape Breton to take up arms against the English, they prayed to be excused. They disliked the English, but feared the vengeance that might follow the open violation of the neutrality they had sworn to preserve. But Mr. F. H. Smith, who has quoted this instance against the historian Parkman, and who seems to regard the expulsion of the Acadians as an act of unjustifiable cruelty, declares in his history of Nova Scotia that, “Even when there was peace, the Acadians were a source of perpetual danger to the English colonists.”

If, therefore, we view the question from a political standpoint, the English were doubtless justifiable in removing from Nova Scotia all the inhabitants that refused to take an oath of allegiance to the British monarch; it was, moreover, a justifiable act to send them where they could no longer endanger the safety of the English settlers. The historians who apologize for the English declare that as early as 1689 the French meditated a similar expulsion of the inhabitants of New York and Albany. This plan was conceived at Montreal, and when it had

been approved by the court of France, the Count of Frontenac received the following instructions: "If you find among the inhabitants of New York, whether English or Dutch, any Catholics on whose fidelity you consider you can rely, you may leave them in their habitations, after making them take the oath of allegiance to his majesty. The officers and principal inhabitants, from whom ransoms can be exacted, must be detained in prison. Respecting all other inhabitants—men, women and children—His Majesty, Louis XIV, deems it proper that they should be put out of the colony and sent to such other quarters as shall be considered expedient, either by land or sea, together or in divisions, all according as you shall find will best secure their dispersion and prevent them, by reunion, affording enemies an opportunity to get up expeditions against that colony." Such was the scheme that served as a precedent for the conduct of the English in Acadia. Fortunately for America lack of power prevented its execution.

If, moreover, we examine the position taken by France in regard to the expulsion of the Acadians, we shall be forced to believe that it was not considered to be either an act of refined cruelty or a political outrage. "Not even was it a *casus belli* on the part of France," declares a recent Canadian historian; "and yet many insignificant and trivial grounds as compared therewith are specifically mentioned in the subsequent Declaration of War, sufficient to show that France fully recognized that England had a perfect right to treat her own subjects when disloyal, as she saw fit."

Such are some of the facts that may be set down in extenuation of what otherwise would be looked upon as an

act of ruthless barbarity. While, however, these facts serve to palliate the harshness of the decree that the Acadians must go into exile, they by no means excuse the manner in which their expulsion was effected. Here there was, at least from our modern point of view, a lack of consideration for the material comforts of the exiles, and a disregard of their feelings, which will continue to merit the hearty condemnation of posterity.

In forming our judgment, however, of the event as a whole, we must remember that since those autumnal days whose beauty has been illuminated by the genius of Longfellow, nearly a century and a half has elapsed, and that even in this brief period the world has seen a marked advance in the cultivation of that noble virtue which we call humanity. Viewed in the present light of this virtue, the conduct of the English towards the Acadians may seem unnecessarily harsh and stern—far more so than it appeared to the men of that generation. Hostages, it would seem, might have been demanded of the Acadians; some overt act of hostility on their part should have been awaited to justify an expulsion which approached so nearly to persecution; England should have taxed her resources to throw a strong force into the province, and thus protected her settlers against the encroachments alike of French and Acadians. Thus, perhaps, might have been obviated a resort to forcible eviction.

Certainly our days have seen the birth of kinder and more humane feelings than ever existed before; we extend our aid and sympathy to the oppressed in all lands. Let us hope that the influence of this broad humanity may prevent for all future time a recurrence of those sad scenes on the coast of Acadia which it is now our task to describe.

In pursuance of the plan he had adopted, Governor Lawrence called upon a number of Acadian deputies, who had applied for the restoration of some fire-arms seized by the government, to swear an unconditional oath of allegiance to King George. At first the deputies refused to take the oath; but when they were summoned before the council the following morning, and learned that their failure to comply would in the eyes of the new governor stamp them as rebels, they yielded to intimidation and consented. They were told, however, that an oath under compulsion could not be accepted. The governor then summoned representative deputies from nearly all parts of the province; but these, trusting to escape the consequences of non-compliance as they had been permitted to escape them on several other occasions, declared that before taking the oath they must have a written promise of exemption from bearing arms against their own people. A meeting of the Nova Scotia council was immediately called, and it was decided, "that as it had been determined before to send all the French inhabitants out of the province if they refused to take the oath, nothing now remained to be considered but what measures should be taken to send them away and where they should be sent to. After mature deliberation it was unanimously agreed that to prevent as much as possible their attempt to return and molest the settlers that may be set down on their lands, it would be most proper to send them to be distributed amongst the several colonies on the continent of America, and that a sufficient number of vessels should be hired with all possible expedition for that purpose."

One of the reasons for this haste, according to Parkman, was that the English garrisons were small and at this

time there was in Nova Scotia a body of New England troops. These troops had been of great service in the capture of Beauséjour, a French stronghold on the Acadian isthmus, and as they had been enlisted for only a year, the governor determined to take advantage of their presence and use them in effecting the expulsion.

Accordingly Colonel Moncton, who was at Beauséjour, was ordered to seize all the able-bodied inhabitants of his neighborhood: while Winslow, of Massachusetts, with his Puritan troops, who "had prayers in camp every day," was ordered to march to Grand Pré, just across the peninsula from Halifax. Here he was to follow the example of Moncton. Similar orders were sent to the English officers at Annapolis and Fort Edward. In the *Fall of New France*, by Gerald E. Hart, may be seen a fine portrait of Colonel Winslow, of Massachusetts. His fat face, surmounted by the regulation powdered wig, and his corpulent figure, seem to betray a character loving ease and cheerful surroundings rather than the rough life of the soldier. Indeed he has left on record that the task on which he was now engaged was a most uncongenial one. Still he was acting under the orders of a superior officer, and he faithfully obeyed his instructions. Summoning the inhabitants of Grand Pré, Mines, and River Canard, "both old men and young men, as well as all the lads of ten years of age," to meet him at the church on a certain day, he stood out before them, and, through the interpreters, read to them the instructions sent by Lawrence in the name of the king: "The part of duty I am now upon is very disagreeable to my natural make and temper, as I know it must be grievous to you, who are of the same species; but it is not my business to animadvert, but to

obey such orders as I receive. Therefore without hesitation I shall deliver you His Majesty's orders and instructions, namely: that your lands and tenements, cattle of all kinds and live stock of all sorts, are forfeited to the crown; with all of your other effects, saving your money and household goods, and you yourselves to be removed from this, his province. I am, through His Majesty's goodness, directed to allow you liberty to carry off your money and household goods, as many as you can without discommoding the vessels you go in. I shall do everything in my power that all these goods be secured to you, and that you are not molested in carrying them off; and also that whole families shall go in the same vessel, and make this remove, which I am sensible must make you a great deal of trouble, as easy as His Majesty's service will admit; and hope that in whatever part of the world you may fall you may be faithful subjects, a peaceable and happy people. I must also inform you that it is His Majesty's pleasure that you remain in security under the inspection and direction of the troops I have the honor to command."

The blow had at last fallen, and so severe was it that its first effect must have been to stun the senses of the listening farmers. When they recovered and awoke to the true meaning of the words they had heard, they saw that resistance was useless, and they bowed their heads in submission.

Elsewhere the English officers were less successful in capturing the inhabitants. Many took alarm, and escaping to the woods, took refuge in Canada and in what is now the State of Maine. The fate of these refugees, some 3500 in all, seems to have excited little sympathy in Canada. The French provincial government is said to

have issued to them boiled hides and horseflesh as rations, and many of them died of starvation.*

The whole number secured by the English is put at 5788—men, women and children—out of a population amounting to about 9200.

When after a long delay the transports arrived, an honest effort seems to have been made to follow the instructions of Winslow, that whole families should go in the same vessel; but that many cases of separation occurred seems to be admitted by all the historians. Such a fate, therefore, might well have overtaken Evangeline and Gabriel, Longfellow's immortal lovers. The English apologists maintain that such separations were unavoidable in view of the fact that members of a family would often escape, and on their recapture would necessarily be put on board the transport that happened to be sailing at the moment.

The transports were ordered to distribute the Acadians among the colonies along the Atlantic coast, and letters were sent with them to the governor of each colony, requesting that the immigrants should be received. In order that there might be no temptation to return, hundreds of houses, with the barns into which had just been garnered the newly harvested crops, were burned before the eyes of the exiles, while yet the transports lingered in the harbors. A description of their grief must be left to the pen of the poet.

When the transports arrived at their respective destinations, the Acadians, homesick and despairing, found them-

* In Hart's *Fall of New France*, a remarkable petition from these exiles to the governor of Quebec is quoted. Among other things they speak of their constant refusal to obey the English, and ask *why they had not been led against the English!*

selves among a people to whom in language and religion they were aliens. Such exiles were naturally a burden to the colonists, and South Carolina and Georgia consulted their own feelings in allowing the Acadians to return to Nova Scotia whenever an opportunity presented itself.

In Pennsylvania nearly 2000 were landed, and the hearts of the Quakers were touched at the sight of their misery. In the records of the Pennsylvania Historical Society, it is stated that the State government expended for the support of these unhappy exiles the sum of £7500. The general court of Boston, however, refused a landing to some of the transports and ordered them to return to Halifax. It seems to us a bitter piece of irony that the Puritans, who had helped to expel the Acadians from Nova Scotia, should have been expected to welcome them in Massachusetts and provide for their necessities.

Many of the exiles, failing to win a livelihood in the colonies, finally wandered back to their old homes, and became the progenitors of those who are found there at the present day. Others, after incredible sufferings, penetrated as far south as San Domingo; still others, hearing that settlers from beloved France inhabited what is now the State of Louisiana, traversed the continent till they reached the mighty Mississippi, and, launching their crafts on its swift tide, ultimately found safe harbor at New Orleans. Here they were joined by refugees from San Domingo. Louisiana had just been transferred from the French to the Spanish government, but the French were still in possession, and the exiles were everywhere kindly received. Once more they heard the sweet accents of their native tongue, and the religion for which they had

been willing to suffer exile was the religion of their adopted country. No mountains gratified their longing for the azure-hued ranges of their own Acadia; but this new land, in the beauty of its flora and the fertility of its soil, surpassed the meadows of Grand Pré and the far-famed valley of Annapolis.

In New Orleans the Acadians were encouraged to seek homes in the beautiful country that is watered by the Teche. In their honor the present parish of St. James was once called Acadia; and when of late years it became necessary to divide the large parish of St. Landry, one portion of it received the same name. In this parish and the adjoining parish of Vermilion are to be found the greatest number of Acadians at the present day.

Here they have found peace and happiness such as the fortune of war would long have denied them in their own country. Sweet is the memory of past labors, sings Vergil, and such may have been the consolation of the Acadian exiles in Louisiana. Sweeter still to the descendants of those exiles must it be to know that their hard fate moved America's poet-laureate to tune his harp to mournful numbers, and that by his song he touched the heart of the civilized world.

JOHN R. FICKLEN.

NOTE.—The writer wishes to acknowledge his obligations to the writings of Professor Alcée Fortier, to the Narratives of Parkman, to *The Fall of New France*, by Gerald Hart, and to the History of Acadia in Justin Winsor's History of America.

II

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OLD ACADIA REVISITED.

(FROM BADDECK.)

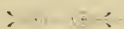
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BY CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER.

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By permission of Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Publishers, Boston.


Old Acadia Revisited.



“ This is the forest primeval: but where are the hearts that beneath it
Leaped like the roe, when he hears in the woodland the voice of the
huntsman?

Where is the thatch-roofed village, the home of Acadian farmers,—
Men whose lives glided on like rivers that water the woodlands,
Darkened by shadows of earth, but reflecting an image of heaven?
Waste are those pleasant farms, and the farmers forever departed!
Scattered like dust and leaves, when the mighty blasts of October
Seize them, and whirl them aloft, and sprinkle them far o’er the ocean.
Naught but tradition remains of the beautiful village of Grand Pré.”

—*Evangeline.*

ET us now turn from the sombre story of old Acadian history to a glimpse of its stage of action at the present day. We are fortunate enough to be able to offer this from the photographic pen of that observant traveler, Mr. Charles Dudley Warner. The following extract from his interesting little volume, entitled “Baddeck,” is inserted through the courtesy of the publishers, Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

Mr. Warner, after a picturesque description of the heroic Madame de la Tour, meanders through Acadian history and geography after the following pleasant fashion:

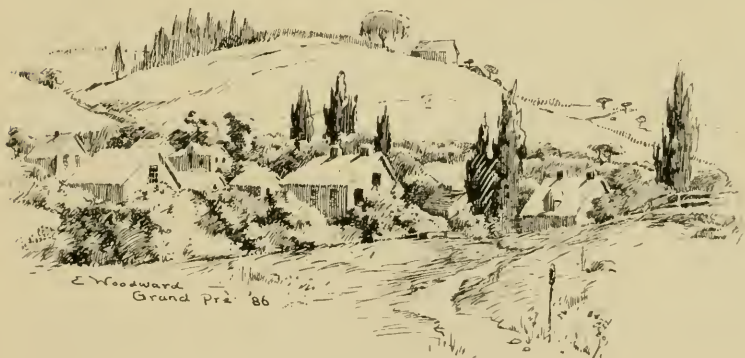
“As we leave the station at Annapolis, we are obliged to put Madame de la Tour out of our minds to make room for another woman whose name, and we might say pres-

ence, fills all the valley before us. So it is that woman continues to reign, where she has once got a foothold, long after her dear frame has become dust. Evangeline, who is as real a personage as Queen Esther, must have been a different woman from Madame de la Tour. If the latter had lived at Grand Pré, she would, I trust, have made it hot for the brutal English who drove the Acadians out of their salt-marsh paradise, and have died in her heroic shoes rather than float off into poetry. But if it should come to the question of marrying the De la Tour or the Evangeline, I think no man who was not engaged in the peltry trade would hesitate which to choose. At any rate, the women who love have more influence in the world than the women who fight, and so it happens that the sentimental traveler who passes through Port Royal without a tear for Madame de la Tour, begins to be in a glow of tender longing and regret for Evangeline as soon as he enters the valley of the Annapolis river. For myself, I expected to see written over the railway crossings the legend,—

“‘Look out for Evangeline while the Bell rings.’

“When one rides into a region of romance he does not much notice his speed or his carriage; but I am obliged to say that we were not hurried up the valley, and that the cars were not too luxurious for the plain people, priests, clergymen, and belles of the region, who rode in them. Evidently the latest fashions had not arrived in the provinces, and we had an opportunity of studying anew those that had long passed away in the States, and of remarking how inappropriate a fashion is when it has ceased to be the fashion.

“The river becomes small shortly after we leave Annapolis and before we reach Paradise. At this station of happy appellation we looked for the satirist who named it, but he has probably sold out and removed. If the effect of wit is produced by the sudden recognition of a remote resemblance, there was nothing witty in the naming of this station. Indeed, we looked in vain for the ‘garden’ appearance of the valley. There was nothing generous in the small meadows or the thin orchards; and if large trees ever grew on the bordering hills, they have given place to rather stunted evergreens; the scraggy firs and balsams, in fact, possess Nova Scotia generally as we saw



VILLAGE OF GRAND PRÉ.

it—and there is nothing more uninteresting and wearisome than large tracts of these woods. We are bound to believe that Nova Scotia has somewhere, or had, great pines and hemlocks that murmur, but we were not blessed with the sight of them. Slightly picturesque this valley is with its winding river and high hills guarding it, and perhaps a person would enjoy a foot-tramp down it; but I think he

would find little peculiar or interesting after he left the neighborhood of the Basin of Minas.

“Before we reached Wolfville we came in sight of this basin and some of the estuaries and streams that run into it; that is, when the tide goes out; but they are only muddy ditches half the time. The Acadia College was pointed out to us at Wolfville by a person who said that it is a feeble institution, a remark we were sorry to hear of a place described as ‘one of the foremost seats of learning in the province.’ But our regret was at once extinguished by the announcement that the next station was Grand Pré! We were within three miles of the most poetic place in North America.

“There was on the train a young man from Boston, who said that he was born in Grand Pré. It seemed impossible that we should actually be near a person so felicitously born. He had a justifiable pride in the fact, as well as in the bride by his side, whom he was taking to see for the first time his old home. His local information, imparted to her, overflowed upon us; and when he found that we had read ‘Evangeline,’ his delight in making us acquainted with the scene of that poem was pleasant to see. The village of Grand Pré is a mile from the station; and perhaps the reader would like to know exactly what the traveler, hastening on to Baddeck, can see of the famous locality.

“We looked over a well-grassed meadow, seamed here and there by beds of streams left bare by the receding tide, to a gentle swell in the ground upon which is a not heavy forest growth. The trees partly conceal the street of Grand Pré, which is only a road bordered by common houses. Beyond is the Basin of Minas, with its sedgy shore, its dreary flats; and beyond that projects a bold

headland, standing perpendicular against the sky. This is the Cape Blomedon, and it gives a certain dignity to the picture.

“The old Normandy picturesqueness has departed from the village of Grand Pré. Yankee settlers, we were told, possess it now, and there are no descendants of the French Acadians in this valley. I believe that Mr. Cozens found some of them in humble circumstances in a village on the other coast, not far from Halifax, and it is there, probably, that the

“‘Maidens still wear their Norman caps and their kirtles of homespun,
And by the evening fire repeat Evangeline’s story—
While from its rocky caverns the deep-voiced, neighboring ocean
Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the wail of the forest.’

“At any rate there is nothing here now except a faint tradition of the French Acadians; and the sentimental traveler who laments that they were driven out, and not left behind their dikes to rear their flocks, and cultivate the rural virtues, and live in the simplicity of ignorance, will temper his sadness by the reflection that it is to the expulsion he owes ‘Evangeline’ and the luxury of his romantic grief. So that if the traveler is honest and examines his own soul faithfully he will not know what state of mind to cherish as he passes through this region of sorrow.

“Our eyes lingered as long as possible and with all eagerness upon these meadows and marshes which the poet has made immortal, and we regretted that inexorable Baddeck would not permit us to be pilgrims for a day in this Acadian land.”

III

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THE ACADIAN LAND.

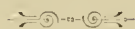
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BY CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER.

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The Acadian Land.



IN introducing the following passages from Mr. Charles Dudley Warner's article, "The Acadian Land," which was published in the February, 1887, number of Harper's Magazine, it may be premised that the route to this region is by the Southern Pacific Railroad, from New Orleans to New Iberia, which is situated on the Bayou Teche, 125 miles to the west. The chief seat of the Acadians is found on and near the Bayou Teche, though there are considerable settlements in the lower river parishes, in St. Landry and Avoyelles parishes and in other parts of Southern Louisiana. It is impossible in the extracts which we are kindly permitted by the publishers to use to do justice to Mr. Warner's sympathetic and photographic pictures of the Acadian land and people. But perhaps enough is given to stimulate curiosity and awaken interest in them.



•• The region south and west of the Bayou Teche, a vast plain cut by innumerable small bayous and streams, which have mostly a connection with the Bay of Côte Blanche and Vermilion Bay, is the home of the Nova Scotia Acadians.

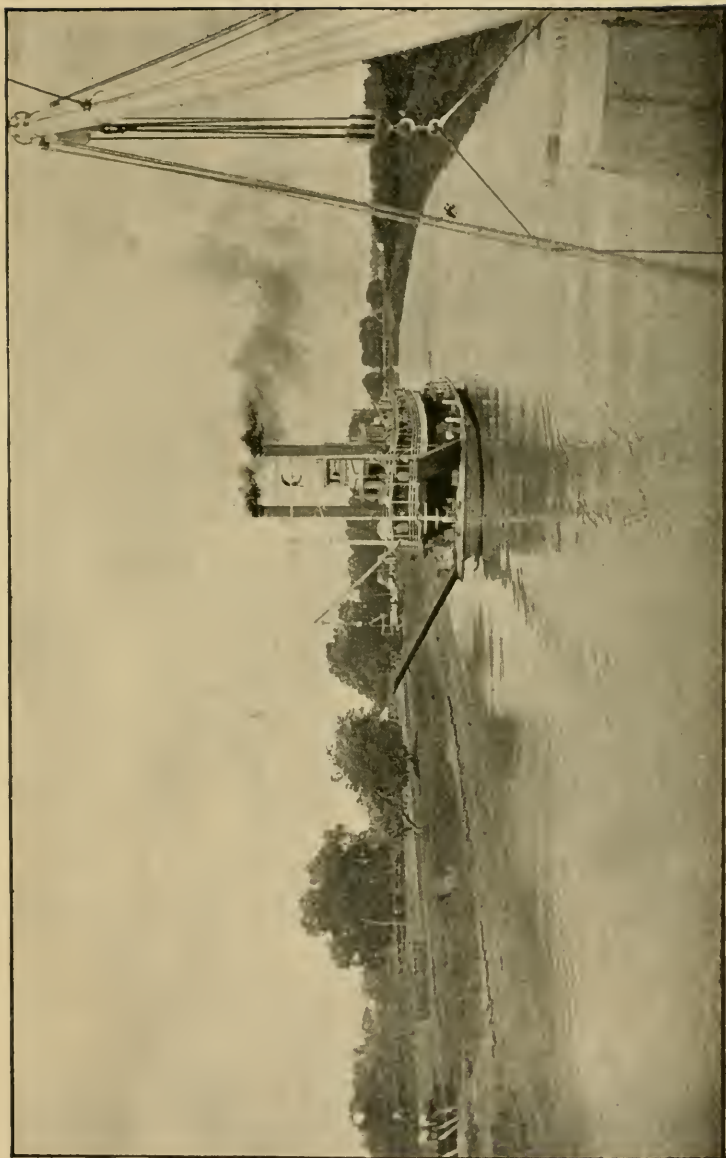
“The Acadians in 1755 made a good exchange, little as they thought so at the time, of bleak Nova Scotia for these sunny, genial and fertile lands. They came into a land and a climate suited to their idiosyncrasies, and which have enabled them to preserve their primitive traits. In a comparative isolation from the disturbing current of modern life, they have preserved the habits and customs of the eighteenth century.

* * * * *

“If the Acadians can anywhere be seen in the prosperity of their primitive simplicity, I fancy it is in the parish of Vermilion, in the vicinity of Abbeville and on the Bayou Tigre. Here, among the intricate bayous that are their highways and supply them with the poorer sort of fish, and the fair meadows on which their cattle pasture, and where they grow nearly everything their simple habits require, they have for over a century enjoyed a quiet existence, practically undisturbed by the agitations of modern life, ignorant of its progress. History makes their departure from the comparatively bleak meadows of Grand Pré a cruel hardship, if a political necessity. But they made a very fortunate exchange. Nowhere else on the continent could they so well have preserved their primitive habits, or found climate and soil so suited to their humor.

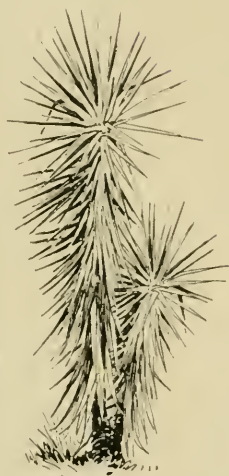
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“To reach the heart of this abode of contented and perhaps wise ignorance we took boats early one morning at Petite Anse Island, while the dew was still heavy and the birds were at matins, and rowed down the Petite Anse Bayou.



VIEW ON THE LOWER TECHE.

“ In the fresh morning, with the salt air, it was a voyage of delight. Mullet were jumping in the glassy stream, perhaps disturbed by the gar-fish, and alligators lazily slid from the reedy banks into the water at our approach. All the marsh was gay with flowers, vast patches of the blue *fleur de lis* intermingled with the exquisite white spider-lily, nodding in clusters on long stalks; an amaryllis (*pancratium*), its pure half-disk fringed with delicate white filaments. The air was vocal with the notes of birds, the nonpareil and the meadow-lark, and most conspicuous of all the handsome boat-tail grackle, a blackbird, which alighted on the slender dead reeds that swayed with his weight as he poured forth his song. Sometimes the bayou narrowed so that it was impossible to row with the oars, and poling was resorted to, and the current was swift and strong. At such passes we saw only the banks with nodding flowers, and the reeds, with the blackbirds singing, against the sky. Again we emerged into placid reaches overhung by gigantic live-oaks and fringed with cypress. It was enchanting.”



* * * * *

The following is Mr. Warner's sketch of the little settlement on Bayou Tigre:

“ This is a purely domestic and patriarchal community, where there are no books to bring in agitating doubts, and few newspapers to disquiet the nerves. The only matter of politics broached was in regard to an appropriation by Congress to improve a cut-off between two bayous. So far as I could learn, the most intelligent of these people had

no other interest in or concern about the government. There is a neighborhood school where English is taught, but no church nearer than Abbeville, six miles away. I should not describe the population as fanatically religious, nor a church-going one except on special days. But by all accounts it is moral, orderly, sociable, fond of dancing, thrifty, and conservative.

“ The Acadians are fond of their homes. It is not the fashion for the young people to go away to better their condition. Few young men have ever been as far from home as New Orleans; they marry young, and settle down near the homestead.

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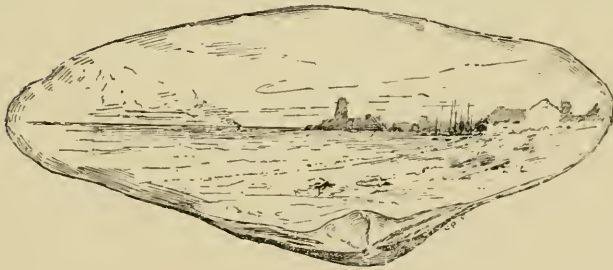
“ The men whom we saw were most of them fine athletic fellows, with honest, dark, sun-browned faces; some of the children were very pretty, but the women usually showed the effects of isolation and toil, and had the common plainness of French peasants. They are a self-supporting community, raise their own cotton, corn and sugar, and for the most part manufacture their own clothes and articles of household use. Some of the cotton jeans, striped with blue, indigo-dyed, made into garments for men and women, and the blankets, plain yellow (from the native nankeen cotton), curiously clouded, are very pretty and serviceable. Further than that their habits of living are simple and their ways primitive, I saw few eccentricities. The peculiarity of this community is in its freedom from all the hurry and worry and information of modern life.

* * * * *

“ We went home gayly and more swiftly, current and tide with us, though a little pensive, perhaps, with too

much pleasure and the sunset effects on the wide marshes through which we voyaged.

“ When we landed and climbed the hill, and from the rose-embowered veranda looked back over the strange land we had sailed through, away to Bayou Tigre, where the red sun was setting, we felt that we had been in a country that is not of this world.”



IV

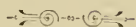
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THE ACADIANS OF LOUISIANA.

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FROM ARTICLE BY ALCÉE FORTIER.

The Acadians of Louisiana.



“ Over the joyous feast the sudden darkness descended.
All was silent without, and, illumining the landscape with silver.
Fair rose the dewy moon and the myriad stars; but within doors,
Brighter than these, shone the faces of friends in the glimmering
 lamplight.
Then from his station aloft at the head of the table, the herdsman
Poured forth his heart and his wine together in endless profusion.
Lighting his pipe, that was filled with sweet Natchitoches tobacco.

* * * * *

Then there were voices heard at the door, and footsteps approach-
 ing

Sounded upon the stairs, and the floor of the breezy veranda.
It was the neighboring Creoles and small Acadian planters,
Who had been summoned all to the house of Basil the herdsman.
Merry the meeting was of ancient comrades and neighbors:
Friend clasped friend in his arms; and they who before were as
 strangers,

Meeting in exile, became straightway as friends to each other,
Drawn by the gentle bond of a common country together.
But in the neighboring hall a strain of music, proceeding
From the accordant strings of Michael's melodious fiddle,
Broke up all further speech. Away, like children delighted,
All things forgotten beside, they gave themselves to the madden-
 ing

Whirl of the dizzy dance, as it swept and swayed to the music,
Dreamlike, with beaming eyes and the rush of fluttering garments.”

—*Evangeline*.

(N his "History of Louisiana" Mr. Gayarré says: "Between the 1st of January and the 13th of May, 1765, about 650 Acadians had arrived at New Orleans, and from that town had been sent to form settlements in Attakapas and Opelousas under the command of Andry."

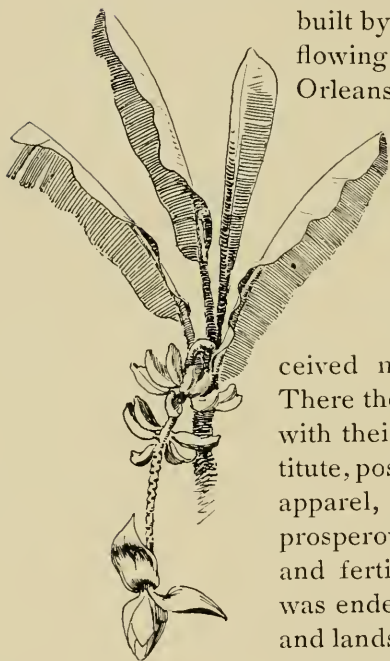
Many others of the unfortunate exiles came to Louisiana, some from the Antilles, but the greater part, in rude boats

built by themselves, floated down the streams flowing into the Mississippi and reached New Orleans, where they expected to find the

white banner of France. Two years before, however, the infamous treaty of Paris had been signed, and Louisiana now belonged to Spain. The Spaniards had not yet taken possession of the colony, and the French officials re-

ceived most kindly the unhappy strangers. There they were on the levee of New Orleans with their wives and children, helpless, destitute, possessing only a few articles of wearing apparel, they who a few years before were prosperous farmers with comfortable homes and fertile fields. But at last their journey was ended and they were again to find a home and lands much more fertile than those which they had left. About fifty miles above New

Orleans the Acadians gave their name to one of the parishes of Louisiana, and the Acadian coast, now called St. James, was one of the first settlements made by the exiles. Later they spread all along the Mississippi river



and the adjoining bayous, and their descendants are to be found in every parish of lower Louisiana. They form an important and useful part of our population, although many of them are as simple and ignorant as their ancestors of 1755. They are, however, generally honest and laborious, deeply religious and very much attached to the idiom of their fathers. Many rose to the highest position in the State and we have among us to-day elegant ladies and cultivated gentlemen belonging to the Acadian race. They are proud of their ancestors, and justly so, because if the latter were peasants, they were, at the same time, martyrs to their religious and patriotic feelings. If there ever was any prejudice against the Acadians among the descendants of the early colonists, it existed only among narrow-minded people and was not manifest.

Having thought of the Acadians and their dialect as an interesting subject to study, I determined to pay a visit to the Attakapas country made classic by the genius of Longfellow. In the beginning of last September I left New Orleans at 7:30 A. M. by the Southern Pacific Railroad and arrived at St. Mary parish after a journey of five hours. Along the route the train passed through fields of tall sugar cane, yellow corn and golden rice. Every now and then we crossed a bayou, or a marsh, or a forest. Shortly after leaving the city we reached "Bayou des Allemands," named for the German settlers who had been sent to America by the famous John Law. In the middle of the bayou is an island covered with trees and briers, on which is a hut which serves as a hunting lodge for the sportsmen, whose canoes for duck-shooting are to be seen everywhere. Trees grow to the edge of the water of all our bayous and render the smallest stream picturesque.

After passing another beautiful stream, Bayou Bœuf, we see a few of the Indian mounds which are so interesting to the archæologist and the ethnologist, and at Morgan City we cross the wide and turbid Atchafalaya, the rival of the Mississippi, and which threatens, if not curbed by artificial means, to divert the waters of the great river from its present channel.

A few miles after passing Morgan City I leave the train and am soon on a plantation situated on both sides of the Teche. After dinner I take my little nephews with me and we go to the bayou. There is in front of the house a drawbridge, which is opened every time a boat or raft passes. We sit on the bridge and I look on the waters flowing beneath and I can hardly see the direction of the current. A few months before the bayou had been a torrent overflowing its left bank. St. Mary parish is one of the most prosperous in Louisiana and everywhere there are central sugar factories with the most modern appliances, the powerful mills, or the diffusion process, and through this busy scene of progress flow the tranquil waters of the Teche, its banks covered with moss-grown live-oaks. Here is the same spectacle which the poet has so admirably described. It is civilization now, but side by side with the primeval forest. Under the stately oaks the children run and play while I lie upon the grass and meditate. My thoughts return to the past, and I imagine what must have been the feelings of the Acadians when they saw for the first time in 1765 the beautiful Attakapas country.

Not far from the plantation where I visited is a village called Charenton. It is but a hamlet, but it possesses a church and a convent of nuns. The good sisters of St.

Joseph have established a school for girls which does great good to the neighborhood. The mother superior, a very agreeable and intelligent lady, is a descendant of the Acadians. Very near the village is a settlement of Indians. I observed them with curiosity, as they are the sole remnant of the Attakapas tribe, the fierce man-eaters. Some of the squaws are handsome, and the men have the real Indian type, although I am told that the tribe is rapidly disappearing and mingling with the negroes. The women make very pretty reed cane baskets, quite different in design from those which the Choctaws sell at the French market in New Orleans; the men cultivate a little patch of ground and sell fish and game. One hundred years ago the Indians were numerous on the Teche; they seem to have melted away without being molested. The mere contact of civilization was sufficient to cause them to vanish. It seems to have been an inevitable destiny, and we may say in the words of Victor Hugo:

"La chose simplement d'elle-même arriva
Comme la nuit se fait lorsque le jour s'en va."

Two miles from Charenton is the Grand Lac, which I desired very much to see, so one morning at daybreak I started in a light buggy with the oldest of my nephews, a Sophomore of Tulane University. There is in reality no route leading to the lake; we had to pass for several miles through a forest on the bank of the Teche and it gave me great pleasure to see the bayou where it appeared most wild. After a ride of two hours we left the shore of the Teche and turning toward the interior we soon arrived at the lake. I felt delighted at the sight; before us stretched the blue waters, which a light breeze caused to undulate

gently, and in the distance could be seen the sails of two schooners which seemed to be the wings of marine birds skimming the surface of the waves. All around the lake is a forest, and on the trees we could see the cardinal bird with his scarlet robe, the jay-bird with his silver and blue jacket, the blackbird with his golden epaulets, and what pleased me most, numberless mocking-birds, those admirable songsters, which the impudent English sparrow is rapidly driving away from our Southern land.

While in St. Mary I had occasion to visit a number of planters, who received me very kindly and who did all in their power to help me in my work. They introduced me to some Acadians and communicated to me a few characteristic expressions of the Acadian language. I was, however, anxious to see St. Martinsville, and after promising to return to St. Mary, I took the train and went to the oldest town on the Teche. It was with real pleasure that I started on my journey; I had never gone to that part of Louisiana before and everything was new to me. I passed on my way Jeanerette and New Iberia in Iberia parish. They are both thriving towns, the latter especially, on account of its proximity to the celebrated salt mines on Avery's Island. It has a handsome Catholic church, an elegant public high school and some beautiful private residences. The following extract from Judge Martin's "*History of Louisiana*" gives a very good idea of the geography of the Teche country:

"The Teche has its source in the prairies, in the upper part of the settlements of Opelousas, and, during the season of high water, flows partially into the Courtableau. As it enters the settlements of Attakapas, it receives from the right side Bayou Fuselier, which Bayou Bourbeux connects

with Vermilion river. A little more than twenty miles farther, it passes before the town of St. Martinsville and reaches, fifteen miles after, the spot on which the Spaniards, soon after the cession, made a vain attempt to establish a city, to which the name of New Iberia was destined; twenty miles from the mouth of the Teche is the town of Franklin."

I may add here that the Teche becomes a noble river shortly before mingling its waters with those of the rapid Atchafalaya. From Jeanerette to New Iberia the fields presented the same beautiful crops of cane, rice and corn which I had seen along the route from New Orleans, but after passing New Iberia, cotton begins to be seen, and I noticed in one patch of ground the curious fact of our four great staples growing side by side—cane, cotton, rice and corn. Such is the wonderful fertility of our soil.

St. Martinsville does not lie on the Southern Pacific Railroad and it is only lately that it has been connected with the main line by a branch leading to the Teche. This may account for the stagnation of business in the town, which before the war was very prosperous. I had letters of introduction to several distinguished gentlemen, but I saw on arriving in that Creole town that a Creole needed no credentials to be well received. I found myself among friends, I may say among relations, as all the persons I met knew my family and I knew theirs. French is essentially the language of the inhabitants and it is well spoken by the educated class. The latter speak English also, but the lower class speak the Acadian French mixed with the Creole patois and a little English. In the interior settlements (*au large*) little or no English at all is spoken, and at Breaux Bridge, in St. Martin parish, and in the ad-

joining parish of Lafayette, French is taught together with English in the public schools. Although we desire to see every child in Louisiana speak English we wish every one to speak French also, and I was very glad to see how the people of St. Martin are attached to their French. Among those who have done the most to encourage the study of French in his parish is Mr. Félix Voorhies, a descendant, on his mother's side, of an old Acadian family. He has established a dramatic society, for which he has written several charming comedies, and although he writes elegant French he is perfectly familiar with the Acadian dialect. I am deeply indebted to him for the interest he took in my work and the help he kindly gave me.

There is but one hotel in St. Martinsville; it is a large house with a wide gallery and massive brick columns. Everything is as in ante-bellum days; no register awaits the names of the guests, and the owner seems to have implicit confidence in the honesty of his boarders.

After dinner I took a walk over the town, and never have I seen a more quiet and orderly place and one where there are so few bar-rooms. The life in that old Creole town reminded me of *autrefois*, as depicted to me many times by my aged friends. There was not much animation in business, but order and decency prevailed everywhere and the people were uniformly affable and polite. I spent the evening very pleasantly with my host, his wife and his grandmother, conversing with the old lady about the past.

I awoke very early the next morning, and on opening the window of my room I saw a pretty sight: the bayou was just beneath, its waters green with water plants and

rushes, and in the distance a prairie, above which was rising resplendent a September sun. A knock was heard at the door, and answering it I found a little negro girl bringing me a cup of real Creole coffee.

At a short distance from the hotel is the church, on the green before which stands the statue of the last curate, Father Jan, who died an octogenarian, beloved by his parishioners. The present priest, Father Langlois, is a botanist of great merit who has made important discoveries in the flora of Louisiana. He is a corresponding member of l'Athénée Louisianais, and I determined to pay him a visit. He received me very kindly and showed me his admirable botanical collections. I asked his permission to look over the church register, and on turning to the year 1765 I saw the record of the first child born of Acadian parents in St. Martin, probably the first born in Louisiana. I give here the exact copy, with the original spelling and punctuation as per certified copy kindly made for me by l'Abbé Langlois:

obit
16 ejusdem
mansis
f. jean
francois

“ Lan mille Sept cent soixante cinq le onze may je ptre
capucin Missionnaire apostolique curé de la nelle accadie
soussigné, ay Baptisé avec les les ceremonies ordinaires
de léglise marguerite anne née la veille de legitime
Mariage d'olivier thibaudaut et de magdelaine Broussard
ses pere et mere le parrain a esté René trahan. et la Mar-
raine Marie thibaudaut qui ont déclaré ne savoir signer de
ce requis selon l'ordonnance aux attakapas les jours et an
que dessus

(signé) f. jean francois c. curé

Masse
Anoyu”

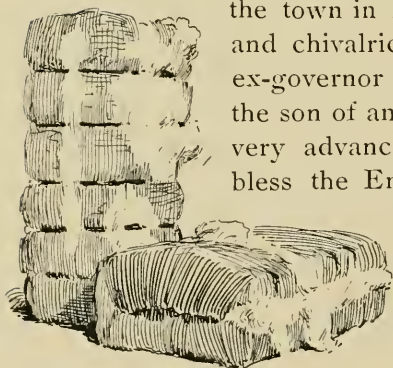
Olivier Thibaudaut, the father of the little girl born in 1765, was a descendant of the celebrated meunier Thibaudaux, seigneur de Chipody in Acadia in Poutrincourt's time. The family is exceedingly numerous in Louisiana and they have given their name to one of our towns on

Bayou Lafourche. One of the Thibodaux was president of the Senate in 1824, and was acting governor for a few weeks, after the resignation of Governor Robertson. The Broussards, the family of Olivier Thibaudaut's wife, are also very numerous in the State. Thibodaux, Broussard, Landry, Leblanc and Bourgeois are the largest families in Louisiana of Acadian descent.

In the register of St. Martin church I saw also the name of a distinguished Louisianian, a professor in the Oratorian order in France and curate of St. Martin for many years. Etienne Viel translated in beautiful Latin verse the twenty-four books of Fenelon's "*Télémaque*." Louisiana may well be proud of a writer of whom Barthelemy, the author of the "*Némésis*," has said:

"Veil, qui de Fénelon virgilisa la prose."

St. Martinsville was the home of a true hero, Alcibiade DeBlanc, ex-justice of our Supreme Court. Not far from the town in Lafayette parish lived another true and chivalric Louisianian, Alexandre Mouton, ex-governor and United States senator, who was the son of an Acadian exile. He died lately at a very advanced age, and Louisiana could but bless the English for sending her a race that could produce such men as the governor and his son, the valiant general who fell a victor at Mansfield.



The eminent men that have arisen among the Acadians in Louisiana show what good elements there are in that race, but unfortunately, they are, as a rule, lacking in ambition. They are laborious, but they appear to be satisfied if, by

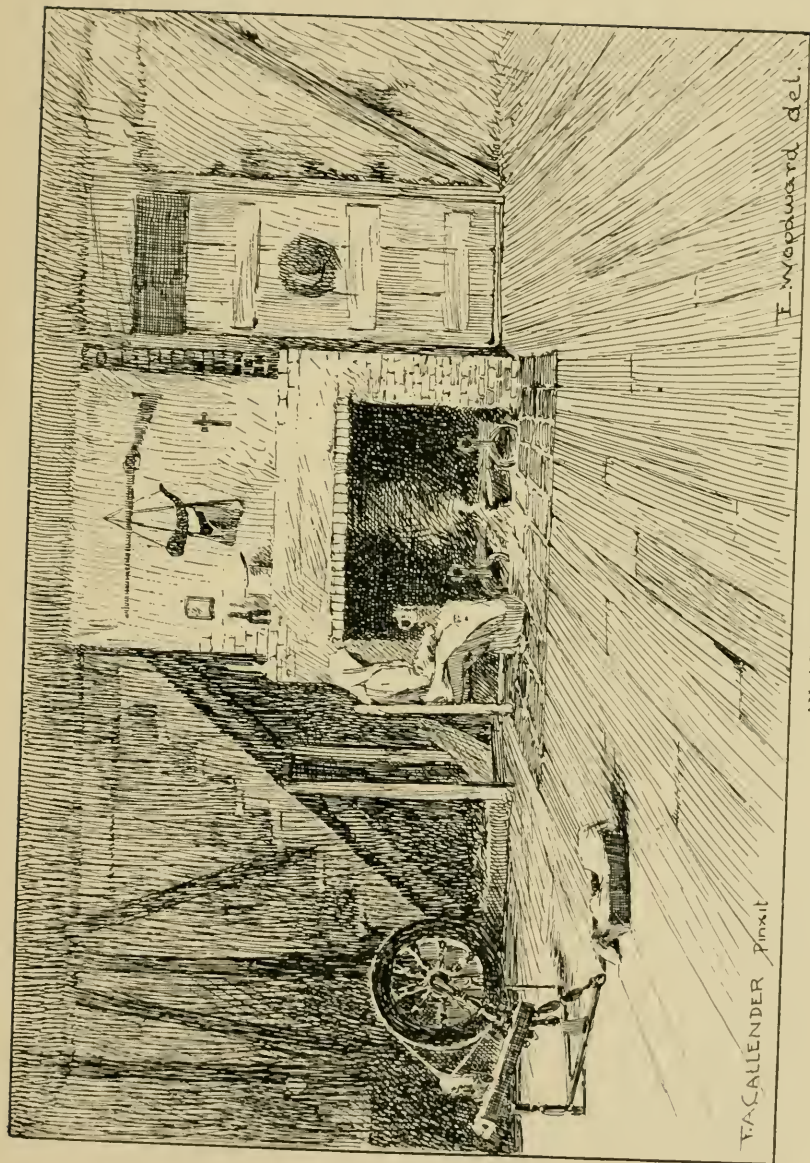
cultivating their patch of ground with their sons, they manage to live with a little comfort. The mother and daughters attend to the household duties and weave that excellent fabric called *cotonnade*. The greatest defect of the Acadians is the little interest they take in education: a great many are completely illiterate. As the public school system progresses, education will spread gradually among them, and being an intelligent race they will produce many men like Alexandre Mouton. Education will, of course, destroy their dialect, so that the work of studying their peculiar customs and language must not be long delayed.

Having heard that every Saturday evening there was a ball in the prairie, I requested one of my friends to take me to see one. We arrived at 8 o'clock, but already the ball had begun. In the yard were vehicles of all sorts, but three-mule carts were most numerous. The ball room was a large hall with galleries all around it. When we entered it was crowded with persons dancing to the music of three fiddles. I was astonished to see that nothing was asked for entrance, but I was told that any white person decently dressed could come in. The man giving the entertainment derived his profits from the sale of refreshments. My friend, a wealthy young planter born in the neighborhood, introduced me to many persons and I had a good chance to hear the Acadian dialect, as everybody there belonged to the Acadian race. I asked a pleasant looking man: "Votre fille est-elle ici?" He corrected me by replying: "Oui, ma *demoiselle* est là." However, he did not say *mes messieurs* for his sons but spoke of them as *mes garçons*, although he showed me his *dame*. We went together to the refreshment room, where were beer and

lemonade, but I observed that the favorite drink was black coffee, which indeed was excellent. At midnight supper was served; it was chicken gombo with rice, the national Creole dish.

Most of the men appeared uncouth and awkward, but the girls were really charming. They were elegant, well dressed and exceedingly handsome. They had large and soft black eyes and beautiful black hair. Seeing how well they looked I was astonished and grieved to hear that probably very few of them could read or write. On listening to the conversation I could easily see that they had no education. French was spoken by all, but occasionally English was heard.

After supper my friend asked me if I wanted to see *le parc aux petits*. I followed him without knowing what he meant, and he took me to a room adjoining the dancing hall, where I saw a number of little children thrown on a bed and sleeping. The mothers who accompanied their daughters had left the little ones in the *parc aux petits* before passing to the dancing room, where I saw them the whole evening assembled together in one corner of the hall and watching over their daughters. *Le parc aux petits* interested me very much, but I found the gambling room stranger still. There were about a dozen men at a table playing cards. One lamp suspended from the ceiling threw a dim light upon the players, who appeared at first sight very wild, with their broad-brimmed felt hats on their heads and their long untrimmed sunburnt faces. There was, however, a kindly expression on every face, and everything was so quiet that I saw that the men were not professional gamblers. I saw the latter a little later, in a barn near by where they had taken refuge. About



T. A. CALLENDER Pinxit

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AN ACADIAN INTERIOR.

half a dozen men, playing on a rough board by the light of two candles. I understood that these were the black sheep of the crowd, and we merely cast a glance at them.

I was desirous to see the end of the ball, but having been told that the break-up would only take place at 4 or 5 o'clock in the morning, we went away at one o'clock. I was well pleased with my evening, and I admired the perfect order that reigned, considering that it was a public affair and open to all who wished to come, without any entrance fee. My friend told me that when the dance was over the musicians would rise, and, going out in the yard, would fire several pistol shots in the air, crying out at the same time: *le bal est fini*.

The names of the children in Acadian families are quite as strange as the old biblical names among the early Puritans, but much more harmonious. For instance, in one family the boy was called Duradon, and his five sisters answered to the names of Elfige, Enyoné, Méridié, Ozéina and Fronie. A father who had a musical ear called his sons Valmir, Valmore, Valsin, Valcour and Valérien, while another, with a tincture of the classics, called his boy Déus and his daughter Déussa.

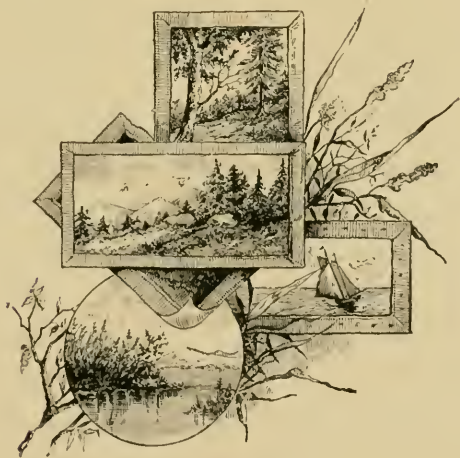
All the Acadians are great riders, and they and their little ponies never seem to be tired. They often have exciting races. Living is very cheap in the prairie and the small farmers produce on their farms almost everything they use. At the stores they exchange eggs and hens for city goods.

Several farmers in the prairie still have sugar houses with the old-fashioned mill, three perpendicular rollers turned by mules or horses. They have some means, but are so much attached to the old ways that they will not

change. It will not be long, however, before the younger generation replaces the antiquated mill with the wonderful modern inventions. The Acadians are an intelligent, peaceful and honest population; they are beginning to improve—indeed many of them, as already stated, have been distinguished, but as yet too many are without education. Let all Louisianians take to heart the cause of education and make a crusade against ignorance in our country parishes!

Before leaving the prairie I took advantage of my proximity to the Gulf to pay a visit to Côte Blanche. The coast of Louisiana is flat, but in the Attakapas country five islands or elevations break the monotony. These are rugged and abrupt and present some beautiful scenes. A few miles from the prairie is a forest called Cypremort; it is being cleared, and the land is admirably adapted to sugar cane. The road leading to Côte Blanche passes for three miles through the forest and along Cypremort Bayou, which is so shallow that large trees grow in it and the water merely trickles around them. On leaving the wood we enter on a trembling prairie over which a road has been built, and we soon reach Côte Blanche. It is called an island, because on one side is the Gulf and on the other is the trembling prairie. We ascended a bluff about one hundred feet high and beheld an enchanting scene. In the rear was the wood which we had just left stretching like a curtain around the prairie, to the right and to the left were a number of hills, one of which was one hundred and fifty-seven feet high, covered with tall cane waving its green lances in the air, while in front of us stood the sugar house with large brick chimneys, the white house of the owner of the place, the small cottages

of the negroes on both sides of a wide road, and a little farther the blue waters of the Gulf. I approached the edge of the bluff, and as I looked at the waves dashing against the shore and at the sun slowly setting in a cloudless sky, I exclaimed: "Lawrence, destroyer of the Acadian homes, your cruelty has failed. This beautiful country was awaiting your victims. We have here no Bay of Fundy with its immense tides, no rocks, no snow, but we have a land picturesque and wonderfully fertile, a land where men are free; *our* Louisiana is better than *your* Acadia!"



V

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THE ACADIANS OF ROMANCE.

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FROM "EVANGELINE,"

BY HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

The Acadians of Romance.



IN the Acadian land, on the shores of the Basin of Minas,
Distant, secluded, still, the little village of Grand-Pré
Lay in the fruitful valley. Vast meadows stretched to
the eastward,
Giving the village its name, and pasture to flocks without
number.
Dikes, that the hands of the farmers had raised with labor
incessant,
Shut out the turbulent tides; but at stated seasons the flood-
gates
Opened and welcomed the sea to wander at will o'er the
meadows.
West and south there were fields of flax, and orchards and
cornfields
Spreading afar and unfenced o'er the plain; and away to
the northward
Blomidon rose, and the forests old, and aloft on the
mountains
Sea-fogs pitched their tents, and mists from the mighty
Atlantic
Looked on the happy valley, but ne'er from their station
descended.
There, in the midst of its farms, reposed the Acadian vil-
lage.

* * * * *

Thus dwelt together in love these simple Acadian
 farmers,—
 Dwelt in the love of God and of man. Alike were they
 free from
 Fear, that reigns with the tyrant, and envy, the vice of
 republics.
 Neither locks had they to their doors, nor bars to their
 windows;
 But their dwellings were open as day and the hearts of the
 owners;
 There the richest was poor, and the poorest lived in abun-
 dance.

Somewhat apart from the village, and nearer the Basin of
 Minas,
 Benedict Bellefontaine, the wealthiest farmer of Grand-
 Pré,
 Dwelt on his goodly acres; and with him, directing his
 household,
 Gentle Evangeline lived, his child, and the pride of the
 village.

* * * * *

Thus, at peace with God and the world, the farmer of
 Grand Pré
 Lived on his sunny farm, and Evangeline governed his
 household.
 Many a youth, as he knelt in the church and opened his
 missal,
 Fixed his eyes upon her as the saint of his deepest
 devotion.

* * * * *

But among all who came young Gabriel only was welcome:

Gabriel Lajeunesse, the son of Basil the blacksmith,
Who was a mighty man in the village, and honored of all men.

* * * * *

He was a valiant youth, and his face, like the face of the morning,

Gladdened the earth with its light, and ripened thought into action.

She was a woman now, with the heart and hopes of a woman.



WILLOW ON SITE OF BASIL'S FORGE.

“Sunshine of Saint Eulalie” was she called; for that was the sunshine

Which, as the farmers believed, would load their orchards with apples;

She too would bring to her husband's house delight and
 abundance,
 Filling it full of love and the ruddy faces of children.
 Soon with a soundless step the foot of Evangeline fol-
 lowed.
 Up the staircase moved a luminous space in the dark-
 ness,
 Lighted less by the lamp than the shining face of the
 maiden.
 Silent she passed through the hall, and entered the door
 of her chamber.
 Simple that chamber was, with its curtains of white, and
 its clothes-press
 Ample and high, on whose spacious shelves were carefully
 folded
 Linen and woollen stuffs, by the hand of Evangeline
 woven.
 This was the precious dowry she would bring to her hus-
 band in marriage,
 Better than flocks and herds, being proofs of her skill as
 a housewife.

* * * * *

Pleasantly rose next morn the sun on the village of Grand
 Pré;
 Pleasantly gleamed in the soft, sweet air the Basin of
 Minas.

* * * * *

Every house was an inn, where all were welcomed and
 feasted;
 For with this simple people, who lived like brothers
 together,

All things were held in common, and what one had was another's.

Yet under Benedict's roof hospitality seemed more abundant:

For Evangeline stood among the guests of her father:

Bright was her face with smiles, and words of welcome
and gladness

Fell from her beautiful lips, and blessed the cup as she
gave it.

Fairest of all the maids was Evangeline, Benedict's
daughter!

Noblest of all the youths was Gabriel, son of the black-
smith!

* * * * *

So passed the morning away. And lo! with a summons
sonorous

Sounded the bell from its tower, and over the meadows a
drum beat.

Thronged ere long was the church with men. Without
in the church yard

Waited the women. They stood by the graves, and hung
on the headstones

Garlands of autumn leaves and evergreens fresh from the
forest.

Then came the guard from the ships, and marching
proudly among them

Entered the sacred portal. With loud and dissonant
clangor

Echoed the sound of their brazen drums from ceiling and
casement—

Echoed a moment only, and slowly the ponderous portal

Closed, and in silence the crowd awaited the will of the soldiers.

Then uprose their commander, and spake from the steps of the altar,

Holding aloft in his hands, with its seals, the royal commission.

“ You are convened this day,” he said, “ by his Majesty’s orders.

Clement and kind has been; but how you have answered his kindness

Let your own hearts reply! To my natural make and my temper

Painful the task is I do, which to you I know must be grievous.

Yet must I bow and obey, and deliver the will of our monarch:

Namely, that all your lands, and dwellings, and cattle of all kinds

Forfeited be to the crown; and that you yourselves from this province

Be transported to other lands. God grant you may dwell there

Ever as faithful subjects, a happy and peaceable people!

Prisoners now I declare you, for such is his Majesty’s pleasure!”

* * * * *

Four times the sun had risen and set; and now on the fifth day

Cheerily called the cock to the sleeping maids of the farm-house.

Soon o'er the yellow fields, in silent and mournful procession,
Came from the neighboring hamlets and farms the Acadian women,
Driving in ponderous wains their household goods to the sea-shore,
Pausing and looking back to gaze once more on their dwellings,
Ere they were shut from sight by the winding road and the woodland.
Close at their sides their children ran, and urged on the oxen,
While in their little hands they clasped some fragments of playthings.

Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth they hurried; and there on the sea-beach
Piled in confusion lay the household goods of the peasants.
All day long between the shore and the ships did the boats ply;
All day long the wains came laboring down from the village.
Late in the afternoon, when the sun was near to his setting,
Echoed far o'er the fields came the roll of drums from the churchyard.
Thither the women and children thronged. On a sudden the church-doors
Opened, and forth came the guard, and marching in gloomy procession
Followed the long-imprisoned, but patient, Acadian farmers.

Even as pilgrims, who journey afar from their homes and
their country,
Sing as they go, and in singing forget they are weary and
wayworn,
So with songs on their lips the Acadian peasants descended
Down from the church to the shore, amid their wives and
their daughters.

* * * * *

Half way down to the shore Evangeline waited in silence;
Not overcome with grief, but strong in the hour of
affliction—
Calmly and sadly she waited, until the procession ap-
proached her,
And she beheld the face of Gabriel pale with emotion.
Tears then filled her eyes, and, eagerly running to meet
him,
Clasped she his hands, and laid her head on his shoulder,
and whispered,—
“ Gabriel! be of good cheer! for if we love one another
Nothing, in truth, can harm us, whatever mischances may
happen!”
Smiling she spake these words; then suddenly paused,
for her father
Saw she, slowly advancing. Alas! how changed was
his aspect!
Gone was the glow from his cheek, and the fire from his
eye, and his footstep
Heavier seemed with the weight of the heavy heart in his
bosom.
But with a smile and a sigh, she clasped his neck and
embraced him,

Speaking words of endearment where words of comfort
availed not.

Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth moved on that mournful
procession.

There disorder prevailed, and the tumult and stir of em-
barking.

Busily plied the freighted boats: and in the confusion
Wives were torn from their husbands, and mothers, too
late, saw their children

Left on the land, extending their arms, with wildest en-
treaties.

So unto separate ships were Basil and Gabriel carried,
While in despair on the shore Evangeline stood with her
father.

* * * * *

And with the ebb of the tide the ships sailed out of the
harbor,

Leaving behind them the dead on the shore, and the
village in ruins.

II.

Many a weary year had passed since the burning of
Grand-Pré,

When on the falling tide the freighted vessels departed,
Bearing a nation, with all its household gods, into exile.
Exile without an end, and without an example in story.
Far asunder, on separate coasts, the Acadians landed;
Scattered were they, like flakes of snow, when the wind
from the northeast

Strikes aslant through the fogs that darken the Banks of
Newfoundland.

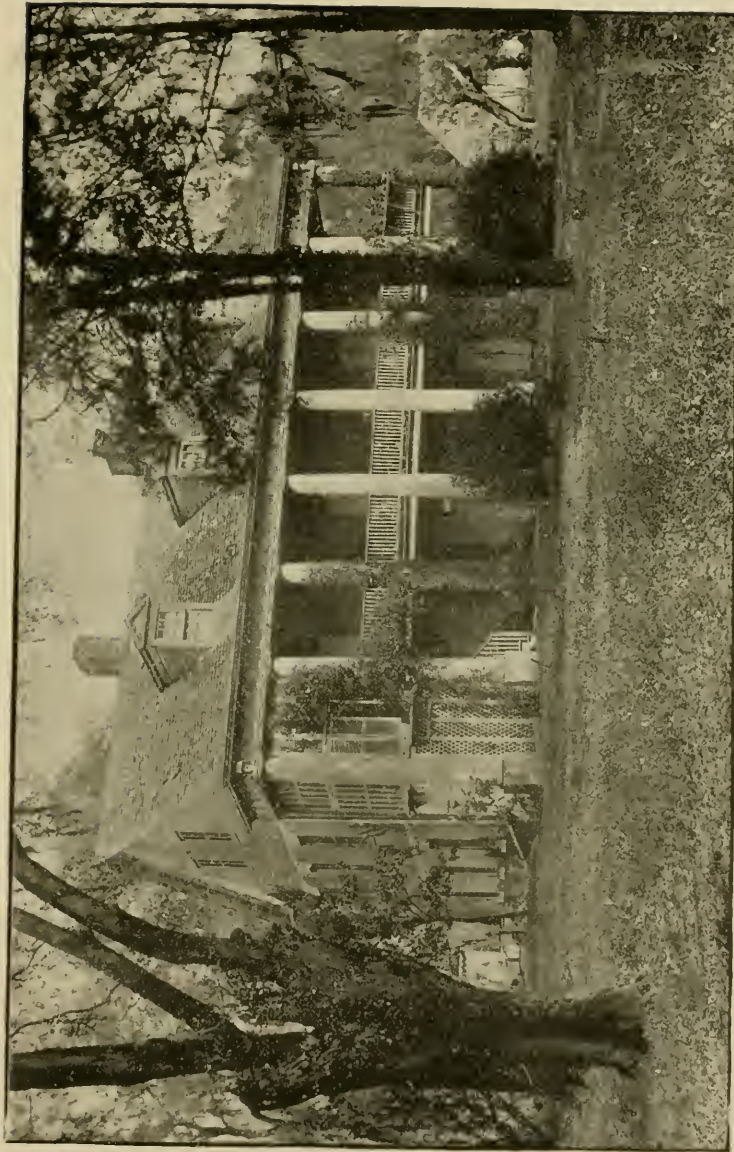
Friendless, homeless, hopeless, they wandered from city
to city,
From the cold lakes of the North to sultry Southern sa-
vannas,—
From the bleak shores of the sea to the lands where the
Father of Waters
Seizes the hills in his hands, and drags them down to the
ocean,
Deep in their sands to bury the scattered bones of the
mammoth.

* * * * *

Friends they sought and homes; and many, despairing,
heart-broken,
Asked of the earth but a grave, and no longer a friend
nor a fireside.
Written their history stands on tablets of stone in the
churchyards.
Long among them was seen a maiden who waited and
wandered,
Lowly and meek in spirit, and patiently suffering all
things.

* * * * *

Sometimes she lingered in towns, till, urged by the fever
within her,
Urged by a restless longing, the hunger and thirst of the
spirit,
She would commence again her endless search and en-
deavor;
Sometimes in churchyards strayed, and gazed on the
crosses and tombstones,



PLANTATION HOUSE. WEEK'S MANSION, NEW IBERIA.

Sat by some nameless grave, and thought that perhaps in
its bosom
He was already at rest, and she longed to slumber beside
him.
Thus did that poor soul wander in want and cheerless
discomfort,
Bleeding, barefooted, over the shards and thorns of exist-
ence.

* * * * *

It was the month of May. Far down the Beautiful
River,
Past the Ohio shore and past the mouth of the Wabash,
Into the golden stream of the broad and swift Missis-
sippi.
Floated a cumbrous boat, that was rowed by Acadian boat-
men.
It was a band of exiles: a raft, as it were, from the ship-
wrecked
Nation, scattered along the coast, now floating together,
Bound by the bonds of a common belief and a common
misfortune;
Men and women and children, who, guided by hope or by
hearsay,
Sought for their kith and their kin among the few-acred
farmers
On the Acadian coast, and the prairies of fair Opelousas.
With them Evangeline went, and her guide, the Father
Felician.
Onward o'er sunken sands, through a wilderness sombre
with forests,
Day after day they glided adown the turbulent river;

Night after night, by their blazing fires, encamped on its borders.

Now through rushing chutes, among green islands, where plumelike

Cotton trees nodded their shadowy crests, they swept with the current.

Then emerged into broad lagoons, where silvery sandbars Lay in the stream, and along the wimpling waves of their margin,

Shining with snow-white plumes, large flocks of pelicans waded.

Level the landscape grew, and along the shores of the river,

Shaded by china trees, in the midst of luxuriant gardens, Stood the houses of planters, with negro cabins and dove-cots.

They were approaching the region where reigns perpetual summer,

Where through the Golden Coast, and groves of orange and citron,

Sweeps with majestic curve the river away to the eastward.

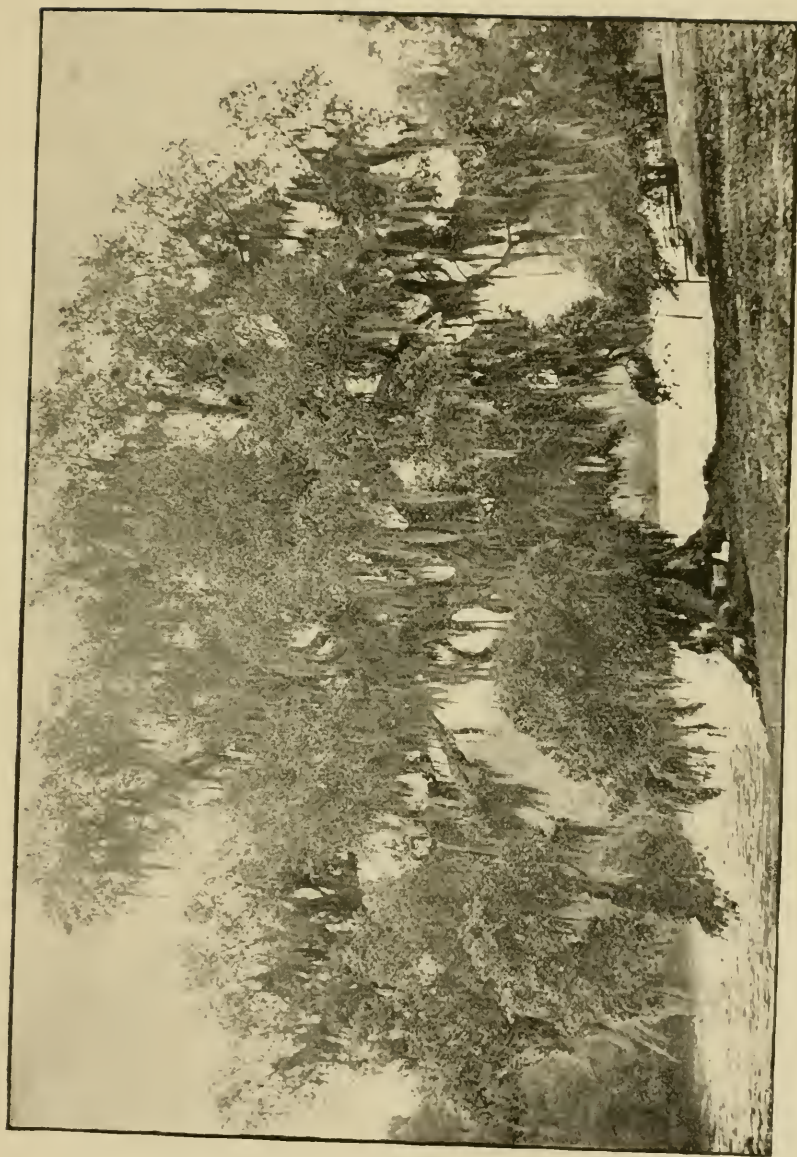
They, too, swerved from their course; and, entering the Bayou of Plaquemine,

Soon were lost in a maze of sluggish and devious waters, Which, like a network of steel, extended in every direction.

Over their heads the towering and tenebrous boughs of the cypress

Met in a dusky arch, and trailing mosses in mid-air

Waved like banners that hang on the walls of ancient cathedrals.



A LIVE OAK ON THE TACHE.

Deathlike the silence seemed, and unbroken, save by the
herons
Home to their roosts in the cedar trees returning at sunset,
Or by the owl, as he greeted the moon with demoniac
laughter.
Lovely the moonlight was as it glanced and gleamed on
the water,
Gleamed on the columns of cypress and cedar sustaining
the arches,
Down through whose broken vaults it fell as through
chinks in a ruin.
Dreamlike, and indistinct, and strange were all things
around them;
And o'er their spirits there came a feeling of wonder and
sadness—
Strange forebodings of ill, unseen and that can not be
compassed.
As, at the tramp of a horse's hoof on the turf of the prai-
ries,
Far in advance are closed the leaves of the shrinking mi-
mosa,
So, at the hoof-beats of fate, with sad forebodings of evil,
Shrinks and closes the heart, ere the stroke of doom has
attained it.
But Evangeline's heart was sustained by a vision, that
faintly
Floated before her eyes, and beckoned her on through the
moonlight.
It was the thought of her brain that assumed the shape of
a phantom.
Through those shadowy aisles had Gabriel wandered
before her,

And every stroke of the oar now brought him nearer and nearer.

* * * * *

Thus ere another noon they emerged from the shades: and before them

Lay, in the golden sun, the lakes of the Atchafalaya.
Water-lilies in myriads rocked on the slight undulations
Made by the passing oars, and, resplendent in beauty, the
lotus

Lifted her golden crown above the heads of the boatmen.

Faint was the air with the odorous breath of magnolia blossoms,

And with the heat of noon; and numberless sylvan islands,
Fragrant and thickly embowered with blossoming hedges
of roses,

Near to whose shores they glided along, invited to slumber.
Soon by the fairest of these their weary oars were suspended.

Under the boughs of Wachita willows, that grew by the margin,

Safely their boat was moored; and scattered about on the greensward,

Tired with their midnight toil, the weary travelers slumbered.

Over them vast and high extended the cope of a cedar.
Swinging from its great arms, the trumpet-flower and the
grapevine

Hung their ladder of ropes aloft like the ladder of Jacob,
On whose pendulous stairs the angels ascending, descending.



EVANGELINE'S DREAM.

Were the swift humming-birds, that flitted from blossom
to blossom.

Such was the vision Evangeline saw as she slumbered
beneath it.

Filled was her heart with love, and the dawn of an open-
ing heaven

Lighted her soul in sleep with the glory of regions celes-
tial.

Nearer, ever nearer, among the numberless islands,
Darted a light, swift boat, that sped away o'er the water.
Urged on its course by the sinewy arms of hunters and
trappers.

Northward its prow was turned, to the land of the bison
and beaver.

At the helm sat a youth, with countenance thoughtful and
careworn.

Dark and neglected locks overshadowed his brow, and a
sadness

Somewhat beyond his years on his face was legibly writ-
ten.

Gabriel was it, who, weary with waiting, unhappy and
restless,

Sought in the Western wilds oblivion of self and of sor-
row.

Swiftly they glided along, close under the lee of the
island,

But by the opposite bank, and behind a screen of pal-
mettos;

So that they saw not the boat, where it lay concealed in
the willows;

All undisturbed by the dash of their oars, and unseen,
were the sleepers;

Angel of God was there none to awaken the slumbering maiden.

Swiftly they glided away, like the shade of a cloud on the prairie.

* * * * *

Then, said Father Felician,

“ Daughter, thy words are not idle; nor are they to me without meaning,

Feeling is deep and still; and the word that floats on the surface

Is as the tossing buoy, that betrays where the anchor is hidden.

Therefore trust to thy heart, and to what the world calls illusions.

Gabriel truly is near thee; for not far away to the southward,

On the banks of the Teche, are the towns of St. Maur and St. Martin.

There the long-wandering bride shall be given again to her bridegroom,

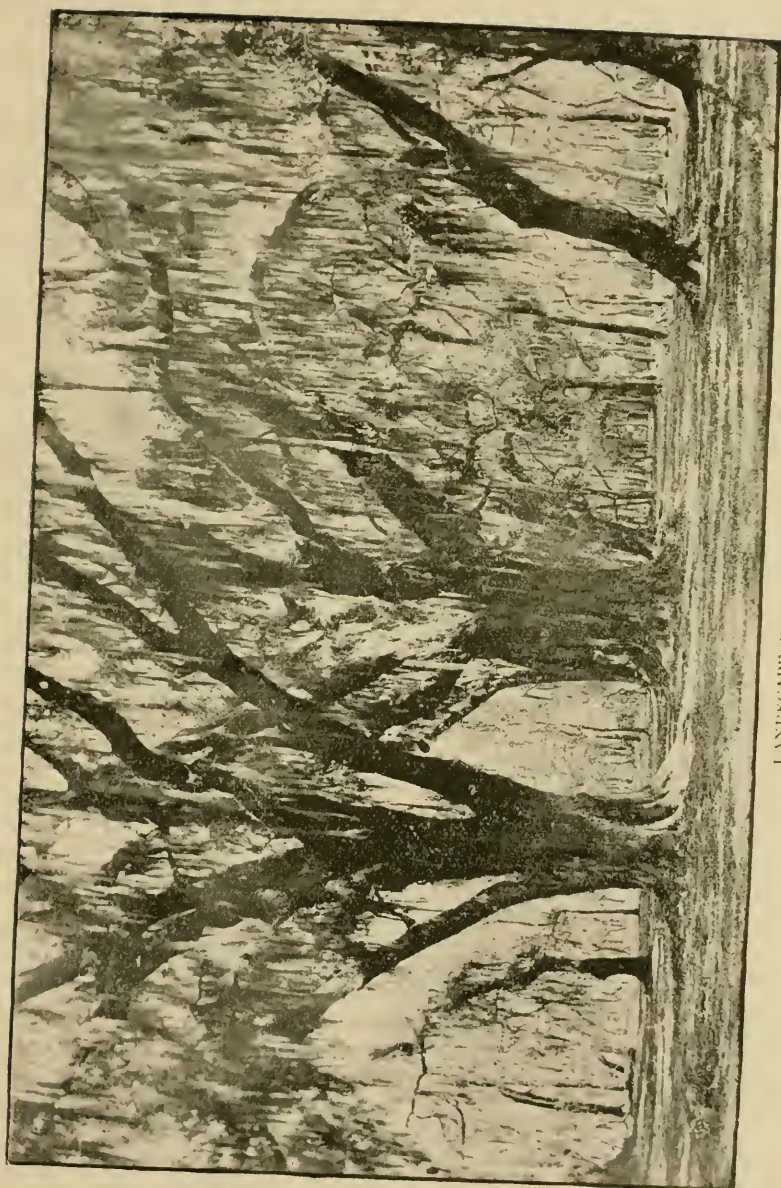
There the long-absent pastor regain his flock and his sheepfold.

Beautiful is the land, with its prairies and forests of fruit trees;

Under the feet a garden of flowers, and the bluest of heavens

Bending above, and resting its dome on the walls of the forest.

They who dwell there have named it the Eden of Louisiana.”



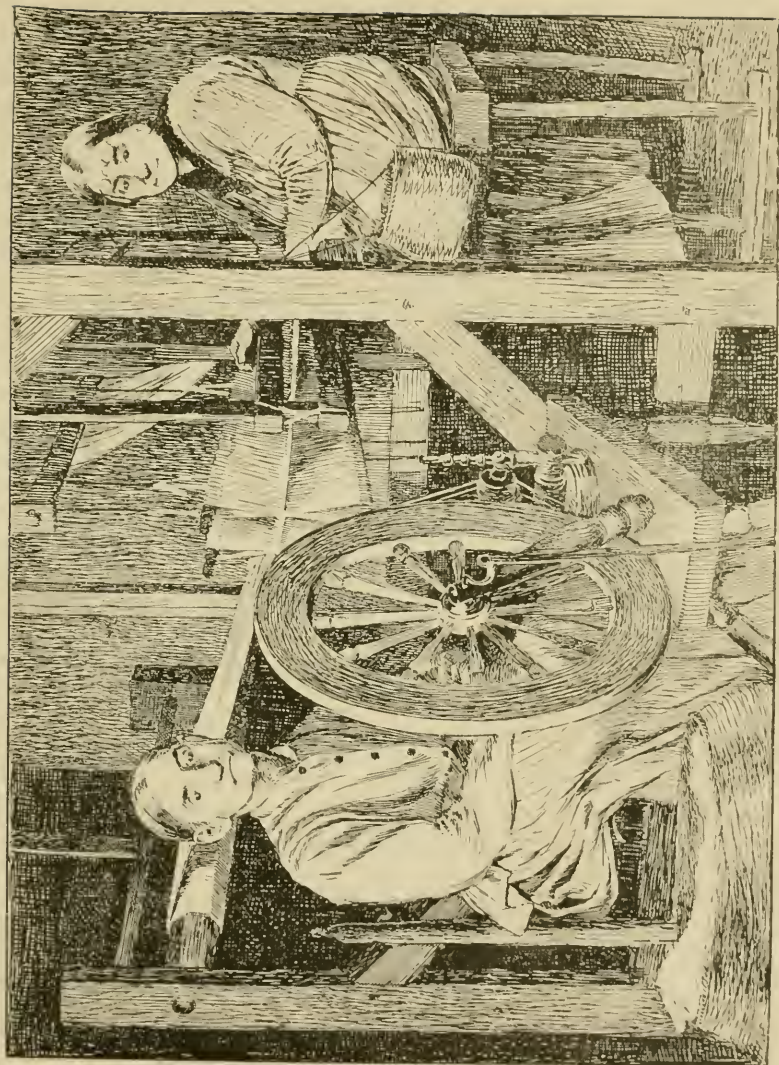
LANDSCAPE ON BAYOU TIGRE.

With these words of cheer they arose and continued
their journey.
Softly the evening came. The sun from the western horizon
Like a magician extended his golden wand o'er the landscape:
Twinkling vapors arose; and sky and water and forest
Seemed all on fire at the touch, and melted and mingled
together.
Hanging between two skies, a cloud with edges of silver.
Floated the boat, with its dripping oars, on the motionless
water.
Filled was Evangeline's heart with inexpressible sweetness.
Touched by the magic spell, the sacred fountains of feeling
Glowed with the light of love, as the skies and waters
around her.
Then from a neighboring thicket the mocking-bird, wildest
of singers,
Swinging aloft on a willow spray that hung o'er the water.
Shook from his little throat such floods of delirious music,
That the whole air and the woods and the waves seemed
silent to listen.
Plaintive at first were the tones and sad: then soaring to
madness
Seemed they to follow or guide the revel of frenzied Bacchantes.
Single notes were then heard, in sorrowful, low lamentation;
Till, having gathered them all, he flung them abroad in
derision.

As when, after a storm, a gust of wind through the tree
tops
Shakes down the rattling rain in a crystal shower on the
branches.
With such a prelude as this, and hearts that throbbed with
emotion,
Slowly they entered the Teche, where it flows through the
green Opelousas,
And, through the amber air, above the crest of the wood-
land,
Saw the column of smoke that arose from a neighboring
dwelling;—
Sounds of a horn they heard, and the distant lowing of
cattle.

* * * * *

Then, as the herdsman turned to the house, through the
gate of the garden
Saw he the forms of the priest and the maiden advancing
to meet him.
Suddenly down from his horse he sprang in amazement,
and forward
Rushed with extended arms and exclamations of wonder;
When they beheld his face, they recognized Basil the
blacksmith.
Hearty his welcome was, as he led his guests to the
garden.
There in an arbor of roses with endless question and
answer
Gave they vent to their hearts, and renewed their friendly
embraces,



"IN THE FISHERMAN'S COT THE WHEEL AND THE LOOM ARE STILL BUSY."

Laughing and weeping by turns, or sitting silent and
thoughtful.

Thoughtful, for Gabriel came not.

* * * * *

Not that day, nor the next, nor yet the day that succeeded,
Found they trace of his course, in lake or forest or river.
Nor, after many days, had they found him.

* * * * *

Gabriel was not forgotten. Within her heart was his
image.

Clothed in the beauty of love and youth, as last she beheld
him,

Only more beautiful made by his deathlike silence and
absence.

Into her thoughts of him time entered not, for it was not.

* * * * *

Over him years had no power; he was not changed, but
transfigured;

He had become to her heart as one who is dead, and not
absent:

Patience and abnegation of self, and devotion to others.

This was the lesson a life of trial and sorrow had taught
her.

So was her love diffused, but, like to some odorous spices,
Suffered no waste nor loss, though filling the air with
aroma.

Other hope had she none, nor wish in life, but to

Meekly follow, with reverent steps, the sacred feet of her
Saviour.

Thus many years she lived as a Sister of Mercy: fre-
quenting

Lonely and wretched roofs in the crowded lanes of the
 city,
 Where distress and want concealed themselves from the
 sunlight,
 Where disease and sorrow in garrets languished neglected.

* * * * *

All was ended now, the hope, and the fear, and the
 sorrow,
 All the aching of heart, the restless, unsatisfied longing.
 All the dull, deep pain, and constant anguish of patience!
 And, as she pressed once more the lifeless head to her
 bosom,
 Meekly she bowed her own, and murmured, "Father, I
 thank thee!"

=====

Still stands the forest primeval; but under the shade of
 its branches
 Dwells another race, with other customs and language.
 Only along the shore of the mournful and misty Atlantic
 Linger a few Acadian peasants, whose fathers from exile
 Wandered back to their native land to die in its bosom.
 In the fisherman's cot the wheel and the loom are still
 busy:
 Maidens still wear their Norman caps and their kirtles of
 homespun,
 And by the evening fire repeat Evangeline's story,
 While from its rocky caverns the deep-voiced, neighbor-
 ing ocean
 Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the wail of
 the forest.

THE END.



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